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The Old Two-Card Trick

The tone of patronising approval with which the City and Fleet Street greeted Mr Healey's Budget this week is revealing enough evidence of its lack of socialist thrust. The British Institute of Management and the CBI believe the Chancellor at long last is on the right lines; Labour MPs and union leaders have, justifiably, been a good deal more sceptical. A Budget that offers the average wage-earner an extra £2 per week in his pay packet while promising, if all goes well, the £15,000-a-year executive a bonus of £60 a month on his salary cheque can hardly claim to be egalitarian. But Mr Healey, of course, was primarily interested in something else. The revolt that confronts him over Phase Three comes largely from the skilled unions – and his Budget proposals are probably best seen as an effort to buy the support of such groups as the electricians and the engineers for a third year of wage restraint.

Even in that context they hardly appear tailor-made for success. Once again this year the Chancellor has attempted his familiar two-card trick. But on the last occasion – a year ago – when the unions said 'twist', they very soon found that they were 'bust'. It took only four months between August and December for Phase Two's 5-per-cent limit on pay increases to be overtaken by the cost of living index. For that reason alone, the Chancellor was probably prudent this time round to keep whatever thoughts he had for this year's percentage (or flat-rate) figure strictly to himself. Whatever figure he eventually names is bound to be met with disbelief and derision – and having used the sterling sanction last year, he can scarcely press the same panic button again.

There is also something distasteful about the entire device. It is not so much the Tories' objection – that a whole lot of people will be directly affected by the outcome of negotiations in which they have had no part (though it is only fair to admit that there is force in the argument against 'taxation without representation'); more to the point, however, is the unions' own understandable dislike of being, as it were, publicly bound over to keep the economic peace. There is an essential crudity in Mr Healey's approach. The original object for the use of the 'carrot and the stick' was a donkey; and the unions are fully entitled to feel offended by Mr Healey's implicit attitude towards them.

The alternative strategy – and on this occasion it would almost certainly have been the wiser one – would have been for the Chancellor to have gambled everything on trying to create a climate in which an agreement could be reached. That would, of course, have meant removing the 'conditional' element of his Budget – and, no doubt, the IMF would have regarded any such offer without strings as reckless and dangerous. But a Labour government is surely entitled to claim a greater understanding of the psychology of the trade union movement than graduates of the Bank of England sitting on tax-free salaries in Washington.

In any event it could be said to be the unions' turn this year to present the Government with *their* bill. When in July 1975 the unions accepted the need for wage restraint, they did so very much as a lesser evil. 'All right,' the Government had said to them in effect, 'we recognise that you hate the whole concept of wages policy, but are you really sure that you hate it more than mass unemployment, uncontrolled inflation and a collapsing currency – for those are the things you will inevitably get unless we do something now on the wages front?' The unions, after much soul-searching, made the necessary sacrifice – only to discover that all the things they had been threatened with had come to pass anyway. Inflation (originally promised to be in single figures by the end of last year) has now bounced back to 16 per cent and is still rising, unemployment easily tops 1.3 million (it was under 1 million at the time of the original union-cabinet concordat) and the pound stands today 40 cents lower than when Mr Healey appeared that sunny day in July 1975 at Lancaster House. In such circumstances the Chancellor, one might have thought, would have approached this year's negotiations with some humility: instead he has done so in a haughty spirit – and that, as someone once wrote, often goeth before a fall.

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Spotlight on Politics

James Fenton

On the Other Side of the Mountain

We were forced last week to reverse the traditional procedure of the epic poet: we began at the beginning, but ended *in media re*. We knew the Government would survive, but we had not had sufficient opportunity to examine the new condition in which it found itself. Now however, with the announcement of the Budget, we are in a better position to take a broad view. It is as if our train had emerged from a long tunnel, on the other side of a mountain range, in a new country, with a new climate and new customs. Our passports have been checked, the *couchettes* have been folded up, coffee has been served and we settle back to enjoy the view.

And how very quaint this sunny new country is! It has a faintly Ruritanian flavour. One of its parties, the Liberal Party, has just promoted every one of its members to the rank of minister. We can see them, from the train window, strutting around the little town squares, weighed down with medals, sporting great sashes across their capacious stomachs, clicking their heels smartly as they bow to the ladies, and chattering away with an important air. With what deference they are treated by the 'Government' ministers! With what ceremony, what protocol! When a 'Government' minister wishes so much as to cross the street, he asks the gracious permission of his shadow. When the permission is given, he looks right, looks left, looks right again before crossing. In consequence, we are told, there are very few accidents.

At one of the stations we are able to buy some samples of the country's press. We ask, in our best phrase-book tones, for a pro-government paper, an anti-government paper and an independent paper; but we are told, in a dialect we do not quite understand, that this would be impossible. The journals we receive all seem to be anti-government – and yet, in a funny way, they all seem to support the Government. We understand that the ruling party is supposed to be socialist, and yet it prides itself on the support of the capitalists who, when there is a prospect of the capitalist party coming to power, start running for cover. We read of socialist politicians who consider this confidence which they enjoy to be the ultimate seal of approval. We cannot help admiring the respect with which these socialists treat the opinions of their opponents. We have never seen anything like it before.

Well – are we deceived? Is this sweetness and light going to last, or is it merely an early-morning illusion? Will there be tears before bedtime? Can we see that cloud no bigger than a man's hand, of which Sir Harold Wilson warned? Or, when it comes, in what shape will it be? The Stechford by-election, whose result will be known to most readers by the time this paper appears, is likely to revive Tory spirits after their recent bad spell. Mrs Thatcher has already partly re-established her image in the House of Commons. She is good at off-the-cuff budget speeches – after all, taxes are her speciality – and she made a decent enough assessment of Denis Healey's tenth (and last?) effort. Not all that many people stayed to hear what she said, and she rushed through, as if afraid that, once she paused for a moment, she would be barracked as she was last week. But there was no such reaction. The audience which had listened to Healey in a paralysis of boredom (one or two of them nodded off) merely woke up a little at her performance.

As for Healey, it is sometimes said that things are beginning to go his way. This may be so, but if so, one would like to know why. Why does he look so pleased with himself? What does he know that we don't? Watching him in the Commons and afterwards on the television, I was struck by a feature of his face to which insufficient attention has hitherto been paid – I mean, his chins. There are two of them, one tiny and one enormous. The tiny one sits on top of the enormous one, and represents what would, on a normal face, be the chin itself: it is an obscure, genetic memory of a chin, bearing the same relation to a real chin as the coccyx to an ape's tail. Sometimes it seems to float on the large, lower chin, as if it had broken loose from the jaw and acquired a little life of its own. It is difficult to concentrate on the activity of the two chins because the eye is naturally drawn upwards to the more famous eyebrows. Yet it is reasonable to assume that the average viewer of Healey's broadcast will, however much he was entranced by the eyebrows, have been subliminally affected by the performance of the chins. And therefore, we may also assume, they will have noticed the different functions performed by the two.

It was, for instance, the small chin which blurted out the news about cigarette prices; the large one told us how important this was for the nation's health. The small chin let slip the information about petrol; the large one reminded us that we must conserve our oil. When the small chin could not contain the news about vehicle excise duty on small cars, the large one rushed to its aid, telling us how glad we would be that all those nasty heavy lorries were going to be even worse hit. It was the large chin which led us round the Treasury office, explaining that this was where 'we' (presumably the two chins themselves) thrashed it all out, tried to get it right, weighed up the pros and cons, carried out the formidable tasks, and so forth. The large chin had a field day when it came to explaining those tax cuts, although it was left to the small chin to explain how very little they amounted to on an average week's wage. I thought I detected some rather nervous activity on the part of the small chin when Phase Three was being referred to, but that may have been a fault in my set.

The question is: how much attention will people pay to the large, and how much to the small chin. If only 8 per cent of Labour voters in Stechford (according to the *Mail's* NOP poll) were convinced by the large chin that they were going to be materially better off as a result of the Budget, and if the immediate response of the unions on the question of wage restraint ranged from cautious to dusty, it may well be that the Chancellor has missed a great opportunity. It has been pointed out that the purpose of the Budget is medium-term, that it contains no element of electioneering. True enough. But the Government is by no means election-proof.

The fragile peace of Ruritania, with its mock coalition and its decorative consultations, with its key roles played by such figures as John Pardoe (Treasury) and Lord Wigoder (Lords Whip), where Clement Freud is set to keep an eye on Roy Mason, where Jo Grimond makes sure Tony Benn doesn't get out of step, where Baroness Seear tells Roy Hattersley always to keep a hold of nurse for fear of finding something worse, where David Penhaligon manages to tail both Peter Shore and Bill Rodgers at the same time, where Cyril Smith is ready to come down like a ton of bricks on Albert Booth, and where Jeremy Thorpe keeps a fatherly eye on David Owen – well, at any moment something could give. It might happen in Parliament (and it could surely not happen again without Labour being obliged to face the country – despite the way Healey's large chin referred to the silly business of last week); it might happen over Phase Three; it might happen over Direct Elections; it could conceivably happen within the Labour Party itself.

If Mrs Thatcher seemed last week to have lost the initiative, the situation could be reversed by a minor catastrophe. In the received wisdom of the Labour Party, Roy Jenkins's last Budget was the great missed opportunity of 1970. A responsible effort, yes, but lacking the necessary oomph to see the party through. Might there not be a dangerous parallel in Healey's latest effort? One supposes, from his manner, that it *is* intended to be his last. One rather hopes that it won't turn out to be Labour's last budget as well.

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Paul Johnson

The Apotheosis of Tammany Jim

It was Harold Wilson's dearest wish that Labour should become 'the natural party of government'. Well – he has got it. After last week's cavortings at Westminster, any pretence that Labour is concerned with political, social and philosophical objectives – that it is a party of idealism and integrity – must now be abandoned. It has become an organisation of like-minded careerists for securing government office. How they get there, and what they do there, is of very little importance; scarcely of importance at all. The object is power; or, if not power, at least the trappings and rewards of office. Labour has become the party of Tammany Hall.

For what Harold Wilson tended to overlook, when talking about a 'natural' governing party, is that Labour has long been the 'natural' party of local government in large areas of the country. There, for decades, it has held power and dispensed its goodies; and there, for decades – not everywhere but in many conurbations where its power has been perpetuated – the corrosion of office has eaten ever deeper into its ideals and standards, so that now in too many places for the party's health the stench of corruption fills the air. One stream of thought in the party has always urged that Labour's grip on local government should set the pattern for power at a national level, and that the risks should be accepted. For many years Herbert Morrison held this view. But it should be added that Morrison was, himself, a one-man anti-corruption crusade. And he came from a generation of Labour leaders who were quite content to live in a modest semi-detached, or a council property, and did not expect to have country manor houses, farms and all the other trappings. Even so, the Morrisonian approach to politics was successfully rebuffed at Westminster: if Gaitskell and Bevan agreed on nothing else, they agreed on keeping Morrison out.

Today the mantle of Morrison has descended on Jim Callaghan. And last week was his apotheosis. He has successfully torn the ideological guts out of the Labour Party and hurled them into the dustbin. The party is now dead; a lifeless corpse; but (he thinks) it will serve its turn in a mummified condition, so long as nobody expects it to speak, or walk or actually do anything. If words are required from the mummy, then Tammany Jim will do the talking. He is good at it. So long as Jim is not expected to discuss issues, or principles, or ideals – any of those awkward matters which get in the way of efficient Tammany administration – he is a very sound performer. I'm thinking of a moment on TV ten days ago, when Jim was saying how he'd prefer a solid government majority to the present uncertainty, etc. Well in that case, said a reporter, why don't you have an election? Now, now, now, said Jim, you won't expect me to comment on that question will you – ho, ho, ho. And, for the benefit of the viewer, he switched on that menacing *capo di mafia* smile with which we are all becoming familiar.

Of course Jim was lucky. De-gutting the Labour Party could only have been carried out as it was, in a swift and ruthless operation, against the clock, with ministers and MPs of all parties so paralysed with fear of losing their jobs and their seats that, in effect, they decided to 'leave it all to Jim'. Indeed, it is perfectly clear that Jim deliberately created the cliff-hanger atmosphere and timing precisely so that he could purchase the Liberals without, in effect, consulting anyone else. The TUC, the Parliamentary Labour Party, the NEC (still less the constituency parties or other affiliated bodies) were thus allowed to play no part in the bargaining process. Jim, while pub-

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licly proclaiming his conviction that Labour would win an election, was privately informing anyone who would listen that an April poll would mean a certain Margaret Thatcher landslide – so would they please give him a mandate to strike any bargain he could? Thus the cabinet, too, had no real say in the matter, other than registering approval or disapproval: they were handed the Lib-Lab pact exactly like the Budget. Here was a historical decision which, if it means anything at all, will change the whole character of the Labour Party. But so far as the party was concerned, its constitution and established procedures might never have existed. The bargain was entirely a Tammany Jim operation.

Gruesome Coupling

Even so, he would not have been able to carry it through without Michael Foot's enthusiastic and active cooperation. Foot has found a huge taste for power, or at any rate the apparatus of power, in the last three years, and he was ready to pledge his final *tranche* of socialist reputation to help Jim to stay in No 10. It is a staggering example of the way in which power corrupts to reflect that, only a year ago, Foot opposed Callaghan as party leader on precisely the grounds that he was a natural conservative who might do a deal at the party's expense. But last week Foot was at Callaghan's side at every stage of the conspiracy: fixing the Left, tying up the dirty, ragged ends of the package, and then as fugleman, drum-beater and chorus-master of Jim's 'triumph'. At present, Tammany Jim is receiving the full benefit of Foot's inexhaustible capacity for hero-worship. Foot, li[illegible] Madame de Chevreuse, 'loves with an ever-lasting love, but it is always changing its object'. Once it was Lord Beaverbrook. Then it was Nye Bevan. More recently it has been Mrs Gandhi; but since she disappeared through the trap-door, there is no one else but Jim. So the former Robespierre from Ebbw Vale has been quite content – positively delighted in fact – to play an ebullient J. H. Thomas to Jim's Ramsay Mac.

As a matter of fact, this last comparison is grossly unfair to MacDonald. In 1931 he may have been deluded and foolish, but historians now exculpate him from the taint of treachery or dissembling. He knew he was sacrificing his reputation with the Left: that was why he warned younger men, like Herbert Morrison, not to follow him. He left the party; he did not drag it in his wake. And there were no secret deals, no flavour of Tammany Hall. We shall probably never get an objective version of Jim's talks with the Liberals, let alone be able to savour the atmosphere of nudges, winks and innuendoes (it is impossible to imagine Jim conducting business in any other way). But it was evidently a meeting not so much of minds (still less of spirits) as of bodies urgently needing to satisfy that most elementary of politician's appetites – retaining the seat. In short, a marriage of convenience, erected on a basis of gross materialism, with none of the parties giving the slightest consideration to the national interest, political beliefs or public opinion. A gruesome coupling; as Hamlet put it:

> Nay, but to live
> In the rank sweat of an enseamèd bed,
> Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
> Over the nasty stye!

Such acts breed their own maggots; misunderstandings, half-truths and even downright lies are inevitable. A man who goes to bed with a prostitute agrees, and pays, the price beforehand; but this copulative occasion is replete with blank cheques which may bounce, and promissory notes no one intends to honour. 'We have not abandoned socialism,' said Michael Foot afterwards. 'Socialism is the one thing this country is not now going to get' was David Steel's version of the contract. I note that my new Labour Party membership card still trumpets the desire to secure for the workers 'the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange'. Would it not now be more honest to add 'subject to the veto of the Liberal Party'; or, better still, drop it altogether?

Jim's Victims

For of course the victim in this unholy matrimony is the rejected Left, the homely girl from next door, not considered grand enough for Jim and his pals, now they are at ease in a world where brandy costs £100 a bottle and the chauffeurs are kept waiting till dawn. The Left has been capturing the constituency parties, but it has no dowry in actual votes, and its MPs are much too timid to carry their convictions into the lobbies. So it is open to rape any time the leadership want; no marriage lines needed. Some 70 or more Tribuneite MPs have always been flatly refused the right to special consultations now freely, even eagerly, granted to a mere 13 Liberals. Even Mr James Molyneaux is graciously closeted with Tammany Jim. When did Mr Mikardo enjoy such privileges? Watching TV on the night Jim bought the Liberals, I felt compassion for the burly figure of poor Eric Heffer, shaking his great dazed head, like a baited and bewildered bull which had just been deprived of its *cojones*. And indeed all that now remains for the parliamentary Left is to provide lobby-meat.

It may, however, be a different matter with the union bosses. Most of them have no seats or jobs to lose; they hold them for life, thank you very much Jim! The Liberals are now jubilant that there will be no more government policies and legislation at the command of the TUC – that, they say, is the whole point of the deal. Do the union bosses know this? They kept very quiet during the period of frenzied negotiations. Jack Jones, a noisy bow-wow who rarely fails to give tongue during the night, was deafeningly silent; not even little Clive Jenkins let out a whimper. Of course the union barons are slow to react to new situations. But there is now the sound of heavy thinking going on in Congress House; the old ironmongery is at work. And the unions have custody of the only bit of policy the government is still free to enact: Wage Restraint Phase Three. Unlike the parliamentary Left, they have got a dowry, albeit a shopsoiled one; and it is a dowry without which the government has no future.

But it probably has no future anyway. Tammany Jim's deal with the Liberals brought a brief respite, 'sweet not lasting, the perfume and suppliance of a moment' – though some would detect a more cloacal odour. Both parties are fully prepared to renounce the deal the moment they judge it opportune. That, however, will not restore matters; neither will be *virgo intacta* again. The Liberals, it seems to me, have made the bigger concession in this respect, for their ability to conjure up general election votes was always based on a sort of confidence trick. Whatever they may say, and however completely they dissolve the alliance, it will be a long time before they can convince the voters that they still enjoy the purity of independence. Jim has a way of leaving heavy thumb-prints on any possession he handles. He is not the sort of man you would buy a second-hand Liberal Party from.

Buying Time

As for the Government, all the deal did was to save it from a public hanging. Like Dr Faustus, it has now surrendered the party's soul; it will discover that 'The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike'. And was the time worth buying? The Government has no policy other than survival, like Balfour in 1905. Both the IMF and the TUC have a veto on any of its initiatives. Now these two are joined by a third body: the Liberal Party. This weird trio, plus the Labour Party itself, constitute the most incongruous quartet in British political history. It is hard to see it agreeing on anything. We thus have a formula for total stagnation and immobility. Of course there is the oil; but why should anyone think that the electorate, when the time comes, will judge the present Government less likely to waste it than the Tories? Indeed the Government's new allies have already promised to give virtually all the oil to Scotland! My view is that the longer the Government prolongs its existence the more catastrophic will be its eventual defeat. This in itself may not matter much – the Labour Party is dead anyway – but what does matter is the further erosion of public confidence in the good faith and integrity of our professional politicians, and the intrinsic honesty of our system. There were times, last week, when the activities of Tammany Jim and his Liberal friends reminded me vividly of the last days of the Fourth Republic, with French politicos wheeling and dealing right up to the very last minute when the roof came crashing down and buried them all.

NEXT WEEK

Robin Blackburn
Who is China's Khrushchev?
Household Faces 2: Melvyn Bragg
A. J. P. Taylor on Erskine Childers

Because of the Easter holiday, next week's issue of the NEW STATESMAN will go to press one day earlier than usual. It will be on sale in central London on Wednesday and elsewhere on Thursday morning.

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Edward Vulliamy

Italy's Red Reshuffle

'USCIAMO DALLA MISERIA' (We come out from misery); 'RIPRENDIAMOCI LA VITA' (Let us take back life) – these are the kind of slogans which put a fresh coat of paint on the walls of Rome and Bologna. After the most violent outburst by Italy's revolutionaries since 1969, the police and army have occupied Bologna university and many schools and colleges have been taken over by militants for up to ten days. The Communists are rethinking their youth policy, the far Left are mobilising frantically and three policemen and a student have been shot dead.

The *squadristi* behind the recent violence call themselves the 'Autonomi' – the Autonomous. The significance of the 'Autonomi' is easily under-estimated. They have a capacity to mobilise large numbers from the ranks of over 2 million young unemployed in Italy, and from the 900,000 students (a high proportion of them working-class) in the overcrowded, unselective universities. Italian universities have no power to refuse anyone with basic exam qualifications from school. From these areas outside the traditional political system, where the 'sub-proletarian' groups organise, the 'Autonomi' have, in recent months, developed a strategy of guerrilla warfare.

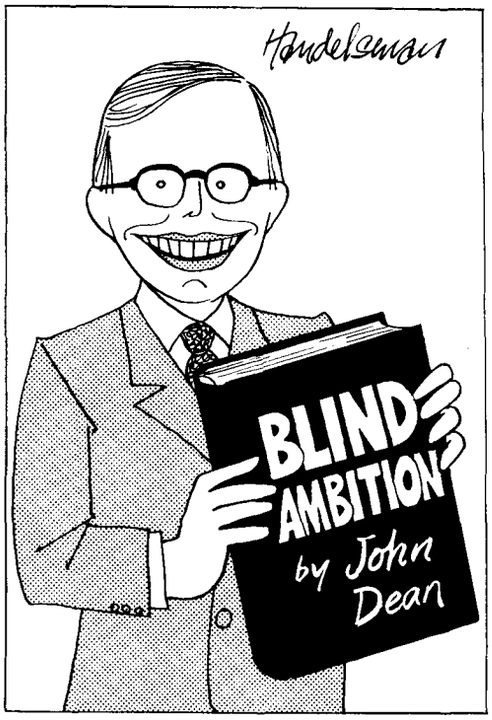
They are the supporters of 'Autonomia Operaia' (Workers' Autonomy), a federation of revolutionaries who stayed in the sphere of spontaneist politics after the 1968-9 troubles, dissatisfied with the rigid organisation of Italy's 'New Left' parties. The recent eruption of the 'Autonomi' around this grouping has carried with it small armed nuclei like the 'Red Brigades', who were probably responsible for the killing of the policeman in Turin a fortnight ago. However, more typical of the 'Autonomi' groups are the 'Metropolitan Indians' with their painted faces, molotovs and crash helmets – the product of exasperation among students, feminists and the unemployed. It is also likely that the extreme Right are infiltrating the 'Autonomi'.

The outburst of violence was deliberately planned to hit hardest in Bologna because, says Renato Zangheri, the city's communist mayor, 'Bologna is the ground of democratic struggle and democratic life' – a reformist showpiece which the revolutionaries are eager to discredit. The violence was timed to occur, says Signor Zangheri, 'when the Communists were on the threshold of government. These people wish to prove us incapable of government.'

An agitator close to the 'Autonomi' in Bologna spoke, he told me, 'for the sub-proletariat. The Communists are not interested in the "fringes". They are the party of the worker-bourgeoisie, afraid to lose the gains made in 1968.' This movement is different from that of 1968-9. In 1968, an anti-authoritarian revolt became an anti-capitalist movement within months. But the 'Autonomi' do not appear to direct their strategy in such an obviously Marxist way. The revolt of 1968 sought an industrial base and, as a result, the 'New Left' parties count proportions of workers among their members ranging from 25-45 per cent. But though the 'Autonomi' seek unity with the workers, they are a movement outside the factories. The violence of the 'Autonomi' could impede, rather than detonate, a wider industrial confrontation.

The 'Autonomi' are emphatically anti-ideological: 'the Communist Party (PCI) is for the politically mature, but we stress action, not ideology. We say it is not necessary to read and write texts. Our movement has vitality and enthusiasm.' Even when talking of Italy's veteran revolutionary, Vittorio Foa, an 'Autonomi' supporter said that the young rebels consider the Maoists and Trotskyists as much part of the Establishment as the Communists: 'Foa is also uninterested in the "fringes". They are ideological traditionalists.'

Vittorio Foa, a good 20 years older than most of his followers, spoke to me with quiet, persistent authority. He is an architect of the now rift-torn electoral cartel 'Democrazia Proletaria' – a fraternity between Maoists and dissidents who had left the Communist and Socialist Parties. The electoral bloc was joined in 1974 by the strong-arm of Italy's far Left – 'Lotta Continua'. Lotta Continua emerged from the Fiat strikes of 1968-9 as a loose alliance of students and workers with little theoretical consistency. Their inclusion in the electoral alliance in fact drove many of Foa's own militants to vote Communist as a protest.



'It's all about this bad lawyer who rehabilitates himself and becomes a bad writer.'

It would however be a mistake to equate Lotta Continua with the 'Autonomi'. In fact they recently condemned the rioters as 'forces that are blind to reality', and they almost compete with the 'Autonomi' for the label, 'ultra-Left'. Since their congress four months ago, Lotta Continua have developed a careful, selective affinity with the 'Autonomi'. The violence in Rome and Bologna was highly co-ordinated and Lotta Continua were involved in the rioting. Signor Zangheri believes that the violence was the culmination of months of planning – and this throws light on Lotta Continua's congress decision.

Lotta Continua have accused their former allies in Democrazia Proletaria of 'right-wing opportunism' – which is to say that Foa denies that the other parties to the cartel were involved in the 'military aspects' of the riots. The violence will, in fact, hasten the formation of a more cemented Democrazia Proletaria who, Fox told me, 'will be concerned with the political aspects of the student and unemployed movements', and will condemn what his cartel calls 'the violence of strangers to the mass movement'.

The revolt of the 'sub-proletariat' has left the Communist Party seriously pre-occupied, not simply because of the immediate problem, but because the problem is symptomatic of the deeper issue of bringing this section of youth to the party. A meeting of the CGIL (Communist-controlled unions) a fortnight ago was dominated by the question of the 'Autonomi', and there was intense discussion in the central committee after the riots.

The reaction of the PCI has been to organise mass demonstrations in support of 'democratic order', in conjunction with all parties within the 'constitutional arc'. The party daily, *Unità*, described the riots as 'a muddled manoevre of anti-democratic provocation . . . animated by a reactionary spirit'. Yet despite this confidence, Fabio Mussi, a member of the PCI central committee, *Rinascita*, explained to me how the party intends to rethink its policies in the universities particularly: 'We must not lose the unity of youth . . . We will battle in the schools and universities to improve conditions and politically isolate the armed groups.' The young Italian Communists will play a crucial role in PCI strategy here. They have adopted a policy called 'Autocritica' which, Mussi said, is a policy of self-criticism 'to develop new ideas' in winning youth to the party. 'The Party must take an initiative . . . a more active stance.'

As a result of the 'Autocritica' approach, young Communists have begun a sort of infiltration of the student Left, hoping to win support 'with the party's line rather than with its organisation', as a Rome spokesman for the PCI put it. The PCI is concerned with the passive support for the 'Autonomi' which is more widespread than is admitted. After all, the 'Autonomi' physically attacked the communist union leader, Luciamo Lama, in Rome university earlier this year while 7,000 students looked on without intervening.

The young Communists are determined that the organisation of students and the unemployed should be modelled on that of the workers' movement; and Signor Mussi recently said to me: 'the union of the

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masses is in the defence of democracy. The masses are not subversive, but will support the constitution of the republic.' Here is the point on which the Communists will stand firm against the revolutionaries. The PCI believe that the republic was founded in 1945 by democratic parties, and must be defend by mass consent to those parties. But a Lotta Continua spokesman in Rome told me of his group's view that 'Fascism was not completely overthrown in 1945, but continued into this republic of the Christian Democrats. Fascist laws remained in the judiciary and internal security. Changes in the bureaucratic administrative structure were insufficient.' Even in 'Red Bologna', the PCI must face this challenge if they are to continue building a base among students and the unemployed. The Communists will probably come up with an answer. They have to.

Rome

Geoff Robertson

Sentenced Without Trial

Following the Appeal Court's decision this week, the Agee-Hosenball farewell debate is scheduled for Parliament next Wednesday. They have been sentenced without trial to a punishment which old criminal law texts placed between 'death' and 'life imprisonment'.

In Britain's golden days, it was thought that the sovereign had no power to expel a law-abiding alien. So, at least, was Charles II advised when he desired to banish a foreigner who had seduced his favourite lady-in-waiting. This impotence was elaborated in a Foreign Office circular in 1852 to European governments, upset that England had become a haven for assassins. 'No foreigners, as such, can be sent out of the country by the executive government.' The first Aliens' Act, in 1905, was motivated by anti-semitism (not for us the tired and poor victims of the pogroms) and fear of dole scroungers. Aliens likely to become a 'charge upon the rates' were to be refused entry, but they had full rights of appeal.

On 5 August 1914 emergency legislation was rushed through the house – all stages were passed in a single day – destroying all rights of appeal and giving untrammelled power of deportation to the Home Secretary. This legislation was never repealed, and it lasted until political embarrassment in 1966 over the 'shuttlecock Asians' forced the Labour government to set up a committee on immigration appeals, chaired by Sir Roy Wilson. It reported that 'after discussion with the Home Office, we are satisfied that there is no need to exclude a case from the appeal system merely because the decision in question was taken on security grounds.' Roy Jenkins wished to retain the final say in national security cases, but promised to give 'decisive weight' to the findings of a special tribunal of 'independent and judicially-minded people'. The 1969 Immigration Appeals Act provided for such a tribunal, which was activated for the first and only time in the case of Rudi Dutschke.

Dutschke, a left-wing German student leader, seriously wounded by a would-be assassin, was given compassionate permission by James Callaghan to recuperate in England. Less compassionately, and despite the fact that Dutschke was sponsored by Michael Foot, Callaghan approved Special Branch bugging and spying on him. On the strength of this evidence, Maudling ordered his deportation, giving him, under the 1969 act, a 2,500 word summary of the case against him and a right to have it tested by a five-member special tribunal. The case lasted five days, and Dutschke was represented by a QC – except for the one day the tribunal sat in secret to hear security evidence. This it could not have entirely accepted, because it found as a fact that Dutschke had not been a danger to security. But its opinion – understandably, as it was composed of a solicitor, a retired colonial judge, two retired senior diplomats and a retired vice-chief of the Defence Staff – was that Dutschke would be a future threat were he allowed to study at Cambridge.

In the ensuing parliamentary debate, Callaghan made one good point: if surveillance showed that Dutschke was engaging in harmful activity, 'I should have expected him to be warned about it.' He should have been cautioned before the deportation notice was issued. But the main criticisms were the illogicality of the tribunal's opinion, given its findings of fact, and its 'secret session' from which the appellant's QC was excluded, contrary to the Wilson recommendations. Maudling should have met these criticisms by appointing the 'independent and judicially-minded people' promised by Roy Jenkins, and by giving the appellant, or at least his counsel, the right to challenge *in camera* evidence, just as defendants are entitled to do in Official Secrets Act trials. Instead, when he introduced the 1971 Immigrants Act six weeks later, he proposed to abolish the appeals procedure altogether, solving the problem of the appellant who was not allowed to know all the evidence by refusing him access to any of the evidence. In Roy Jenkins's words 'because of one case which he has found embarrassing, the Home Secretary has decided to sweep aside the whole appeals procedure in relation to any security or political case.' James Callaghan, leading for Labour on Second Reading, declared: 'There should be a right of appeal' and pledged his party to fight for one.

During the Second Reading debate, Maudling mused that it might be possible to allow deportees to make representations to 'Three Wise Men – a system which works for British civil servants and gives them protection'. He merely floated the idea; but having promised to fight for an appeal, Labour did a complete about-face in committee. Sam Silkin justified the betrayal on the grounds that if an appellant could not for security reasons hear some of the evidence against him, it would be 'wrong' and 'a conflict of interest' for his QC to hear and challenge it because he could not take specific instructions. This is nonsense: barristers cross-examine every day on sketchy instructions, and when internal credibility of evidence or character is concerned, no instructions are needed. The Irish Attorney-General had no difficulty cross-examining British security agents during the *in camera* hearings of the torture case, in the absence of his own legal team and its witnesses.

By the Report stage Maudling's triumph was complete. Silkin went overboard in support of the 'Three Wise Men' procedure. There is one extraordinary passage in which he actually claimed it as a Labour idea ('We urged something akin to the "Three Wise Men" procedure . . . the Home Secretary was attracted by the idea'). James Callaghan and David Steel gave the solution their blessing. But Arthur Davidson had reservations. 'I would not give this power to the present Home Secretary' he said, adding prophetically, 'I would not give this power to my hon. friend the Member for Leeds, South.' The member for Leeds, South was Merlyn Rees.

Agee and Hosenball were given no details of the case against them, not even the approximate dates of their misdeeds. This was contrary to undertakings given by Maudling to the House in 1971 and by Clement Attlee when the purge procedure was set up in 1948 (suspects 'should be given, as far as possible, chapter and verse'). Three elderly, conservative and not particularly distinguished panellists could not comprehend that the role of an investigative journalist is to question the Establishment, because the role of the loyal civil servant is to take orders from the Establishment without demur. The panel had a duty to protect security, just as Agee and Hosenball, as writers, had a duty to question and criticise it. The very qualities which made them good writers would have made them disloyal civil servants. Yet they were judged by standards designed by and for civil servants. Maudling's Three Wise Men turned out to be Rees's Three Blind Mice.

The present procedure assumes that Secret Service evidence is infallible. The organisations which hired Kenneth Littlejohn were responsible for the concocted trial and negligent death of Kenneth Lennon, had Britain convicted of torture at the European Bar, overstated the case against Dutschke, and decided that Dr Linus Pauling, North Vietnam MPs and the Chicago Seven defendants were dangers to national security, have their case accepted without question. Yet their evidence is largely supplied by informers whose word is tainted by fear, by guilt, by greed, by self-interest or by spite. The spy, secure in the knowledge that his version of events will go unchallenged, supplies his controllers with the information they want to hear, or at least will pay to obtain. The papers relied upon by Mr Rees doubtless make harrowing reading. But then, so does John le Carré.

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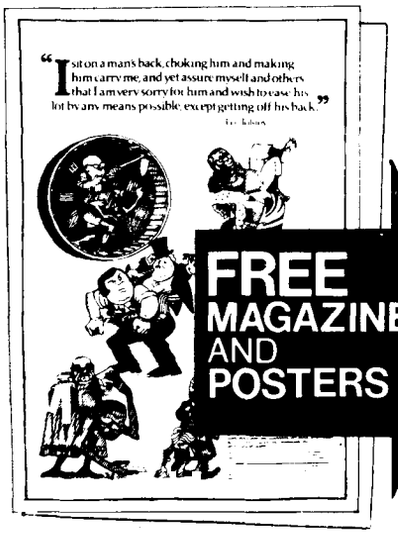
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Household Faces-1 Angela Rippon

The Pioneer

Angela Rippon can scarcely be seen for the bulk of the cameras looming against the glass wall of Studio 1, but she appears on most of the monitors. Shockingly, to an outsider, her extraordinary flyaway eyebrows, which can infuse mild surprise into the dullest item, are crimped together above her nose in a frown of concentration, and she is biting at the end of a felt-tip pen. She yawns, lengthily, which looks perfectly all right through the glass, but on the TV screen most odd.

In less than a minute, the public face is restored. There is a loud countdown from the studio director's desk, red lights wink all over the blackness, and the BBC News-identifying music, with its blend of typing-pool percussion and seafaring brass, comes clattering in. Two seconds before it stops, Ms Rippon raises her head, exerts a slight backward pull of the scalp that tightens the face into its mask of alert formality, and the bulletin is on. Only one big story in this 5.40 p.m. edition: the Annan Report. A 'house story': the BBC talking about itself. The editors of the day are hoping something bigger, broader, turns up by 9 o'clock. It won't.

But what they've got goes forward smoothly: Mr Steel, two bombs in Ireland, Mr Desai. As each page of script is finished with, studio director and vision mixer rip it off and hurl it extravagantly over their bank of buttons on to the floor beyond. No time for the names of all the British Lions' touring party for New Zealand. Forewarned by earphone, Ms Rippon does the shortened version and signs off. 'I'll be back with the nine o'clock news', she says in the specially quiet tones she uses on-air for anything that comes from her personally rather than from the Voice of the News. 'Now the weather from Michael Fish', and hardly has Fish surfaced on the big outside monitors when everything in Studio 1 goes phew, lights go out, and the newsreader is up and off from behind her desk, seizing up a glittery handbag as she strides away on long and gamey legs. It is hard not to mention these, though she would rather one tried.

Angela Rippon has been a working girl for nearly 15 years. Born in Plymouth in 1944, of a Scottish mother and Durham father, she came out of the local primary and grammar school system with an appetite for journalism. This had to be satisfied at first in the photographic department of a local daily, but then came three years' apprenticeship as a junior reporter with Plymouth's Sunday paper, the *Independent*. She had got as far as managing a young people's page, a women's page, and a trip to Aden as Services Correspondent, when BBC Plymouth took note, and signed the young lady up as a TV and radio reporter (in time for the *Torrey Canyon*); and by 1969, she had got to know the hardware so well that Westward Television, the commercial rivals, had nosed in with a better offer: editor of Women's Programmes.

Within a year the face of Angela Rippon – a little rounder then, with what looked alarmingly like kiss-curls at each cheek – was well enough known to appear in a collectors' item called *Who's Who in Television* (price four shillings), produced by the *TV Times*. 'Hobbies: amateur dramatics, rummaging around auctions', it states, an entry to which one would nowadays have to add driving, to and from home on the edge of Dartmoor; ornithology; riding; walking two dogs; and, of course, the odd spot of speciality dancing. It was while dancing at the YMCA jazz club, back in the early Plymouth days, that she had met her husband. 'Christopher Dare, supervisor for engineering firm' says the four-shilling oracle; and few people in 'the business' know more of 'Christy' than that, except that he is widely regarded as a lucky man, especially by the Angela Rippon Lusting Club – an organisation which, centred as it is on South Wales, is mollified only by the fact that Christopher plays rugby.

Mrs Dare stayed with Westward four years, moving into larger formats, chiefly documentary film; but though success came easily here, she was lured away without difficulty from an increasingly desk-bound producer's life by the prospect of work as a National News reporter for BBC-TV. This sounds a comedown, but wasn't, especially as Derrick Amoore, the man in charge of BBC News at that time, expresses it: 'She had been in charge down there, but it was only three reporters and a bicycle, you know.' After two years on the reporter's job came the offer to read the news, more than a decade after the first female aspirant (Nan Winton). The BBC knows, now, that it has a great asset in Angela Rippon. Even on

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Annan-day her bosses, the Scotsman Andrew Todd – editor, TV News – and his Welsh deputy, Alan Protheroe, can sit back and contemplate her performance with pleasure. They shake their heads over her costume allowance, which they believe to be still £120. 'Ridiculous', they chorus.

The lady herself spares the time for an orange juice between bulletins. She is much taller and lighter-boned than the four-square appearance her top half gives on screen. Under the hairstyle, no ear-rings to embarrass her by falling off. What she does seem genuinely embarrassed over is the photo of her (by Lichfield) which must adorn the cover of the new *Radio Times* in spite of the European Song Contest cancellation; but she is privately delighted by the large print of it that Protheroe has arranged for her to have. Her enthusiasm for new techniques survives: she bandies talk of American ENG (Electronic News Gathering, a way of piping outside material directly into the transmission system) with Todd in much the same spirit as, in the current edition of the AA's magazine *Drive*, she devoted her regular column to CB (Citizens' Band radio). As she disappears in the direction of the nine o'clock bulletin, Todd sends word to the newsroom that the Song Contest cancellation should be included as an item. 'But it's got to be done right', he adds. In the event, Ms Rippon announces the demise of her latest and most technical venture with not the least flicker of self-interest.

The bulletin is accidentally overlong, but smooth. Angela Rippon has checked the pronunciation of 'Bolgatanga' with the much-travelled Martin Bell, but he hasn't heard of it either. It comes out sounding very authentic anyway. So does Llanelli. As a speaker, she is quite exceptionally undisturbed by her own fluffs, if any: unusually successful in not looking guilty after a mistake, or allowing one error to breed another. In this she is suited by the current BBC house style, which is to press on at all costs. And an opportunity to do so will come the following evening, when a cued-in interview with Dr Coggan doesn't show. She resumes at the top of the next item and apologises at the end of the bulletin. There are painful inquests after this sort of thing, though given a straight choice editors claim they would rather put out a blemished programme than make a big backstage error, say a wasted trip for a foreign correspondent.

Meanwhile, back in 'the regions', junior Rippons are being brought on, encouraged by a rumour among the commercial companies that ITN is looking for a woman reader. Norwich, of all places – not avant-garde in many things – has two ladies in competition, at Anglia and the BBC. But for the originator of the breakthrough, there is no immediate prospect of major change. The Annan admonitions are too vague a gee-up to force new approaches; and Andrew Todd sees no point in suggesting any while a new Director-General and Managing Director are settling in.

The BBC's big problem remains ITN's *News at Ten*. Its timing is ideal for late parliamentary news; its commercial break is a useful divider between hard fact and feature material. The relatively small volume of current affairs material put out by ITV channels gives the programme a duty – which becomes a freedom – to range more widely than the BBC. And for those who are impressed by such things, the ITV presenters have the slightly raffish and case-hardened look that matches the popular image of journalists. ('Well, Reggie's certainly case-hardened', one ex-newsroom punster agreed.)

It is plainly the BBC's turn now to challenge its reputedly livelier rival with something new. Robin Day has suggested to Annan an hour-long 'newspaper of the air', and if this ever happened, a real news war would be on. What one can say for sure is that if such a project were to be linked by a central News Person, Angela Rippon's candidature would be worth backing against those of her comfortable colleagues from Studio 1. She has not yet acquired that long-term cosiness that is the mark of the civil service on BBC employees. She may not have a Robert Robinsonian verbal flow; and irony, so useful on the box, seems foreign to her nature. But she has an editor's notion of shape; she has the habit of turning ambition into progress; and above all, nobody has yet offered her a job she cannot do.

Jeremy Bugler

Fear of Flying

Bo Lundberg, the Swedish air safety expert, once remarked that a collision between two jumbo jets would set up such a psychological reaction in many people that they would think seriously before they ever flew again. Now it has happened – at least 562 people dead in the Tenerife crash. Will Lundberg be proved right?

The grim measure of the Tenerife collision is there in the air safety statistics: in this one accident more people died than were killed in all scheduled airline accidents, the world over, in 1975. In that year, fewer than 500 died. The 1977 figures so far – over 700 dead in scheduled airline accidents – are running well ahead of the death toll last year, 1,332 passengers. This is what happens when wide-body jets crash, and the death tolls of the next generation of wide-body jets, carrying around 1,000 passengers each, do not bear thinking about.

Bo Lundberg argued some years ago that passengers would start deserting air travel when their morning papers brought them about two major 'headline' crashes a week. He thought this rate would occur unless airlines improved their safety records, simply because air travel was growing so rapidly. In the event, airlines *have* improved their records; in the period 1968-72, there were 0.35 passengers killed per thousand flights, but by 1972-1976, the rate was down to 0.27, according to *Flight International* magazine. (Russian crashes are not counted in. The USSR combines an indifferent safety record with a reluctance to talk about it, perhaps through some kind of technological shame.)

Even charter airlines have greatly improved their safety record; at one time, not long ago, flying by charter was cutting the price of your ticket by increasing your chance of sudden death. But last year only 62 passengers were killed on non-scheduled flights, the lowest figures ever; most were involved in the last flight of an ancient aircraft in Argentina, which suffered a rare structural fault when a wing came off. The charter and non-scheduled flights had a better 1976, pro rata, than the big prestigious airlines.

The flying public seem to know that air safety standards are improving, or at least not getting worse; Bo Lundberg's prediction about how people would give up flying in the wake of a joint-jumbo collision possibly now needs one or two similar collisions to follow on quickly if he is to be borne out. One can represent the public as sheep in this acceptance of flying, meekly wandering through the final departure lounge, thinking about the in-flight movie. But perhaps people are happier with wide-body jets; perhaps they realise that they carry much more navigational and safety equipment, that they reduce the number of flight movements, and maybe even a few tough-minded regulars know they are a safer plane to have a crash in. In the Lufthansa 747 crash at Nairobi three years ago, due to pilot error, 59 people died but the sheer size of the machine allowed 99 people to escape.

People who have an extreme fear of flying have been termed, by at least one psychiatrist, hysterical personalities, unable to keep their personal danger even vaguely in perspective. Yet there are a few broad rules for flying-and-surviving that can be arrived at quite rationally, mainly by examining which airlines and which world regions have a habit of delivering their passengers safely. The safety records of airlines have been studied in detail by the *Sunday Times*'s Insight team in their book *Destination Disaster* (Hart Davis MacGibbon) and what emerges is the very high safety rating of American airlines.

Most European airlines are around the world average in terms of their fatal crash record, but there's a clutch of Third World airlines whose record is bad, probably because of insufficient air-crew training, 'high-time' aircraft and inadequate airfield facilities. But above all, don't fly in Eastern Europe, for Eastern bloc countries have ten times more fatal crashes than the world average. If you just have to fly there, at least avoid Tarom airlines in Romania. Their fatal crash record is 20 times worse than the world average. The overall moral drawn by Insight is that the American airlines are better because Americans make the planes and, when things go wrong, Americans *sue*.

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Jake Podorelski

The Strike That Goes On and On

For the past seven months Asian workers from a film process lab. in Willesden, North London, have been striking for union recognition. They left jobs at which the starting rates were £23 for a 35-hour week and £27 for a 40-hour week. The strike's significance is that it may give a lead to other non-unionist immigrant workers.

Willesden is a deprived part of London. Manufacturing jobs are moving away. The housing stock is running down as fast as it can be patched up. Brent, of which it is the southern part, has more immigrants than any other London borough. Six years ago, as other businesses left the area, a small firm moved in from St John's Wood. It was a film processing company called Grunwick, the name being an acronym formed from the names of three directors – Grundy, Hickey and Ward.

George Ward started the firm in 1965, shortly after returning to England from Rio de Janiero where he had spent over 20 years. An Anglo-Indian, he had come to England from Calcutta in his adolescence and trained as an accountant. He is a colourful character. He sees his firm as a model of job-creating private enterprise under attack from a trades council masterminded by an ultra-Left conspiracy. He describes the Brent Trades Council Secretary Jack Dromey as 'Jackboot Dromey' and has told the local press of his determination to make him 'a political eunuch'.

Seven years after its creation the firm was thriving. A survey carried out by *Which?*, the consumer magazine, in 1972 found that Bonuspool, the company set up to handle mail order work, could process colour film cheaper, faster and better than any of its competitors. Grunwick had started to take orders from the Continent, and a year later the firm took over the lease of a second factory in Willesden.

On Monday 23 August last year over 50 workers walked out of one of the factories when a colleague was sacked. They marched across Willesden to the other factory, where they picketed until they were moved away by police. They kept going back throughout that week and by Friday over 100 were on strike. On the next Wednesday the Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer Staffs made the strike official, gave the strikers retrospective membership and strike pay of £12 a week.

APEX was a strange choice for semi-skilled workers. One account of how it happened was that the strikers phoned the TUC and as the girl at the other end chanced to be an APEX member, like many other TUC staff, they picked that union. Grunwick is one of many small film labs facing the issue of recognition, and with a stake in the key dispute, APEX stands to sweep the board. Even more important, perhaps, was the backing the strikers got from the Brent Trades Council. Despite blacking of overseas and home supplies, Grunwick found other routes and the films kept coming in.

One move seemed sure to be effective – the postal workers refused to handle any mail-order work coming through the Cricklewood sorting office. In a speech to last year's TUC conference Roy Grantham, the APEX general secretary, had described Grunwick as 'typical of many employers who exploit and grossly underpay Asian and West Indian workers'. In November the Cricklewood postal workers imposed a complete ban.

Till then Grunwick had seemed friendless. Now came the counter-attack, spearheaded by the National Association For Freedom which slapped a writ on the UPW alleging a breach of the Post Office Act. The association's Tory members in the House of Commons leapt up on cue. 'If this sort of industrial action goes unchallenged,' said John Gorst, 'one wonders how many newspapers and periodicals which go through the post could survive a determined assault of this nature.' Labour hit back. Audrey Wise accused the Tories of condoning 'slave labour'. Laurie Pavitt (Brent South) made the classic allegation, fiercely contested by the management, that Grunwick workers had had to put up their hands to go to the toilet. Before the case came to court, however, the UPW backed down, satisfied by Grunwick's decision to take the dispute to arbitration.

From that moment on, the Labour government's new industrial legislation and its effectiveness became a key feature of the strike. ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) is empowered under section 11 of the Trade Unions and Labour Relations Act 1974 to make inquiries into a recognition dispute and produce a report. If a union is recommended for recognition and it wishes to make a claim for its members it can take it to the Central Arbitration Commission which has the power to enforce it through the courts. No case has yet gone through the full process: ACAS's emphasis is on conciliation, not arbitration.

ACAS wished to sound out opinion among the workforce by means of a survey. Grunwick said that only the remaining workforce should be questioned. The others had 'dismissed themselves' by walking out. ACAS could not accept this. Grunwick refused to send the service the names and addresses of its workers for a postal ballot (ACAS had come to think that the atmosphere in the firm was too intimidatory for a workplace ballot to be carried out). After a month of fruitless haggling, ACAS sent the questionnaires to the group whose addresses it knew – those who were already APEX members. One hundred and ten forms were sent out and the result, unsurprisingly, was a massive 'yes' for APEX.

ACAS found for union recognition and in mid-February a draft report was sent, inviting comments from both sides. A month passed before it was published, no response having come from Grunwick. Now Grunwick is planning to sue ACAS, with advice from the NAF. Grunwick may try to bolster its case with an internal ballot of the whole company (including managers and directors) made by a private market research firm. Without giving figures, George Ward claims an overwhelming majority for a non-union policy. APEX challenges this ballot. It is known that Ward called for a vote against APEX two days before the poll. (He did not tell the market research firm that he had done this.) Grunwick workers have told me that as the poll was conducted department by department they feared that their vote could be all too easily identified.

Do most of the Grunwick workers want a union? ACAS calculated that at least a third of the workforce (taken as including the strikers) wanted recognition. They thought that this was a large enough proportion to justify their recommendation. The management seems to have hoped, though, that by exploiting ACAS's procedural ambiguities it could let the strike wear itself out. However, APEX is still giving around 90 people strike pay. On the other hand, one of the managers told me that staff are trickling away, and as they go the work load becomes still more heavy. And this is in spite of wage rises of up to 15 per cent (said to be unprecedented in the company's history) which have given mail order workers £23 a week to take home and process workers £27, before deductions – still only half the rates for comparable local jobs.

The strikers say that they have faced extreme pressures from the management and the local police. Ward has admitted having strikers filmed and photographed: 'We are a photographic company after all.' More serious allegations include threats and physical assault. Fifteen people have been arrested while picketing at one of the factories. The second in command at Harlesden has strenuously denied a local MP's suggestion that the police have been acting as a 'company force'. But Grunwick's security officer is an ex-policeman and police admit they have regular contacts with him 'as one does with the security officer of any firm', and that the arrest of pickets in November followed a complaint by the company. APEX's General Secretary, Roy Grantham, has asked the Home Secretary for a full report of the conduct of the Willesden Green police. One of their superior officers frankly says that any such report will be a collation of previous ones, not a fresh investigation.

The strikers have lasted 32 weeks thanks to the massive support they have received from the trade union movement. But the procedures of ACAS, which will take months yet, have been shown to be ill-equipped to deal with the non co-operation and legal threats of managements like Grunwick. The TUC General Council and APEX are now tottering on the edge of calling for all services for Grunwick to be cut-off including the water, gas and electricity. It is hard to see what further proof they need that the Grunwick management will not be persauded by anything but direct intervention.

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London Diary

☐ Claud Cockburn once told me a story – and insisted that it was true – about some gun-runners who made a deal with the Japanese army, then planning to provoke an 'incident' as pretext for invading Manchuria. They were to deliver a consignment of machine-guns, packed in crates, and to be paid in bundles of thousand-yen notes. The exchange, at a lonely beach on a moonless night, went ahead as agreed. When the crates were opened they proved to contain one machine-gun and a quantity of bricks. When the bundles were inspected they proved to contain one thousand-yen note and a quantity of toilet paper. There must be some reason why this story came to my mind on the evening of 23 March.

☐ You have to wonder who offered condolences to whom when the heads of Government of the EEC gathered in Rome last weekend. The host, Signor Andreotti, was about to enter one of those gruelling sessions with the men from the International Monetary Fund, conscious that his austerity measures haven't worked and Italy's economic situation goes from bad to worse. His government depends on Communist tolerance, strained to the limit since the riots in Rome and other cities. President Giscard d'Estaing has been obliged to reconstruct his government after seeing what is known as 'the majority' converted into a popular minority in the French municipal elections. Similar elections have produced bad news for the normally complacent Herr Schmidt; his party has been ejected from the town hall of Frankfurt, a Social-Democratic stronghold ever since the foundation of the Federal Republic. Mr Tindemans of Belgium is in trouble again because of the eternal wrangling between Walloons and Flemings over the language issue. Mr den Uyl of the Netherlands has abruptly become a caretaker Prime Minister, his government has split wide open and the country is heading for a premature general election. Mr Callaghan, on the verge of a similar fate, has saved himself by a deal which he certainly didn't contemplate the last time he met his European opposite numbers. Not surprisingly, the smiles for the photographers were distinctly forced. Ah well, I suppose things must be all right in Luxembourg.

☐ Whatever Morarji Desai stands for politically, he incarnates an Indian myth. It's best compared to the myth of the Republican virtues – austerity, simplicity, frugality – to which the Romans looked back during the more pomp-laden and licentious periods of the Empire. When I went to interview him in 1969, I was somewhat foxed to find the door of his house wide open and no sign of any secretary or servant. After a minute the old man himself called in his reedy voice: 'Mr Jones? I'm in here.' He was seated on a low stool and spinning at a wheel. I wondered if this was an act for my benefit, but learned on inquiry that he span every day. He continued to spin throughout the interview; he let up now and again while he was talking, but went at it with great concentration while I put my questions. It's hard to convey the difficulty of interviewing a man who keeps on spinning. He had been dismissed as Minister of Finance by Mrs Gandhi some months earlier, and he told me solemnly: 'This woman is seeking absolute power.' At that time I was inclined to think (and, alas, I assured NS readers) that this was on a par with similar accusations made against popular leaders who intended to get things done, such as Franklin D. Roosevelt. I'm afraid I never sent Mr Desai my apologies, but maybe he will read this paragraph.

☐ You may remember reading in this column about *No Shining Armour*, the book written by Eddie Milne, former MP for Blyth and crusader against corruption. The book is a detailed and forceful account of the doings of John Poulson, Dan Smith, Andrew Cunningham and that ilk; also of the lack of enthusiasm, to say no more, on the part of leading figures in the Labour Party for having all the facts brought to public notice. When the book was published last year two such figures objected – John Silkin to a passage in which he was mentioned, Ted Short to another passage in which his wife's name occurs. Threatening libel suits, Silkin and Short obtained injunctions for the withdrawal of the book from sale. The publisher, John Calder, has now offered to produce a new edition in which the offending passages are omitted. To this, Silkin has agreed. Short, however, has *not* agreed; his injunction stands, and in the eyes of the law has to stand until terms are agreed between him and the publisher. The inevitable question is: does he object to the 16 lines on page 156 concerning Mrs Short, or to the book itself? There can be no excuse, surely, for the use of this device to suppress a book which isn't now charged with containing any libel.

☐ I've been looking into bio-rhythms, the latest craze. The idea is that your life, from birth to death, is governed by three rhythms: physical with a cycle of 23 days, emotional with 28 days, and intellectual with 33 days. There is an active period when you discharge energy, and a passive period when you recharge it. The point at which you pass from one to the other is a critical day, on which (it says here) you 'exhibit a considerable degree of instability'. You might have a row with your lover, hit your children, scrape your car, or – if you're a printer – make silly mistakes in the NS Diary. A double critical day, with two rhythms crossing, is worse. Once a year you have a treble critical day, and the best thing you can do is stay in bed with the blankets over your head. For three quid you can buy a chart which sees you through the year and tells you when to watch your step. Bio-rhythms were invented by Wilhelm Fliess, the nutty friend of Sigmund Freud. After breaking with him, Freud described him as 'an ambitious man who in his loneliness has lost the capacity to judge what is right and what is permissible'. Fliess also gave to the world the 'nasal reflex neurosis', based on the observation that the mucous membrane of the nose swells with sexual excitement. (In the Dravidian part of India, it is believed that if you sneeze in the presence of someone of the opposite sex you reveal a lech for him, or her. Do *not* visit Madras with a bad cold.) Fliess taught that headaches, neuralgic pains, circulation disorders and the digestive trouble could be relieved by applying cocaine to the nose. If you can believe in bio-rhythms you might as well believe that too.

☐ Mysteriously, I've been sent a brochure by the upper-bracket estate agents, Anscombe and Ringland. It is expensively produced on glossy paper; the foreword, telling you how to get 'guidance' if you're not familiar with London, is translated into Arabic and French. The top buy is a maisonette flat in York Terrace, Regent's Park, at £300,000. If I had the needful I think I'd go for a Georgian house in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea at £290,000. It has ten bedrooms, a wine cellar and a sauna, and the note suggests that it would do nicely for a 'small embassy or ambassadorial residence'. I dare say they'll get rid of it if they can find a small, polygamous, bibulous, overweight ambassador.

☐ This week I had a treat that comes my way only every ten years – a new passport. I'm glad I was in time to get a good old stiff cover, instead of the floppy covers which They have decided to introduce. I notice a new feature, a page devoted to the statement: 'Holder has the right of abode in the United Kingdom.' I suppose it means: 'Holder is not a wog', or so it will be understood by the Powellite immigration men at Heathrow. Still, I like the word 'abode' and am reassured to find that They still write English. Probably it will be replaced sooner or later by 'Holding individual has the privilege of residential situation in the (for certain purposes) United Kingdom.'

Mervyn Jones

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ His abiding interest in cricket continued, and when, to the delight of the spectators, he hit two sixes in the match his eleven played against the touring MCC team at Auckland in 1961, it was perhaps the apogee of his career as Governor-General. – Obituary of Viscount Cobham in *The Times* (Johan Clark)

☐ Investigating some farmland which farmers say is polluted and the Ministry of the Environment says isn't, a reporter for *Nationwide* (BBC1) held out a jarful of earth to a Ministry inspector and asked him if he couldn't smell petrol. No, said the inspector, all he could detect was 'an environmental odour associated with petroleum'. – *Observer* (Anita Finesilver)

☐ As usual, Lord Grade had the last word. Asked if he thought that 'Jesus of Nazareth' would make a profit, he replied: 'I hope it will be profitable. But it depends on how you count profits. There can be profits from glory.' – *Daily Telegraph* (T. Newhouse)

☐ A pensioner rapist, aged 68, got a warning from a judge yesterday: Give it up before you kill yourself. – *Sun* (R. Pankhurst)

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Yvonne Roberts

The Antique Dealer

The man looks harassed, as if retirement has surprised him with too much time. He stands in the garden of his wrought-iron-engraved semi in a posher part of Southsea. The house is spotless, even the greenhouse looks dusted. It is there, on a small trestle table, that two panes of coloured glass, the kind that used to block out the light in narrow Victorian halls, are resting. 'Good morning, sir', says Johnny, puffing on his cigar. 'Got some glass for me, have you? Tomato plants are these? Lovely garden you've got. Lot of work in there. Don't suppose you'd have anything else for me sir?'

The patter is quick and offers no chance for response. It isn't intended to. It is intended to get Johnny over the threshold, into the greenhouse and through to the sitting room. 'Lot of effort in this paintwork. Any old picture frames? Must have taken you years. Nice table that.' Johnny has seen a wooden mantel clock on the sideboard. 'Never look interested in what you might want' is his maxim, so he moves on. 'Been here long, have you, *sir*? That Thirties?' He nods with apparent indifference to the clock. 'Well, it must be', the man says warming to the subject, 'We got married in 1937 and that was a wedding present . . .' Johnny has pressed two £1 notes into his hand and is already off up the garden path. The clock is worthless. 'Give us a ring if you find anything. Got a couple of shops.' He hasn't, of course, got any.

Harry, Johnny's partner, is waiting in the van around the corner. 'It was a real *Costa* house,' Johnny says scornfully, 'full of sombreros from the holiday before last and catalogue gear. Besides, it was too clean anyway – nothing we could use.'

Johnny and Harry are antique dealers. They combine the eye of the totter, the skill of the conman and a knowledge akin to a Sotheby's expert to drum up 'a nice little business' on the road. They pay no tax, claim no sickness benefit, carry £4,000 in cash and travel the country in a battered van. Their take-home pay – or that which is salvaged from the casino tables of Britain – ranges from £80 to £500 and more each a week. They spend it on holidays, booze, family, clothes and taxis. Mortgages, ground coffee, G-Plan furniture and cars are not on the list. They specialise in the 18th century, and the Victorian period. 'I like Queen Anne,' Johnny explains, 'but it only lasted for ten years or so and there's not much chance of finding that stuff where we look.'

Johnny is the younger of the two. At 34, he is 'Alfie' ten years on. His hair is carefully layered, his clothes carefully matched, his eyes automatically seek out the nearest mirror. 'I once got into the house of a woman in her fifties,' he says. 'She wanted me to take her swimming, riding, walking, anything. I was only there for the antiques. She kept trying to chuck out her husband. But he wouldn't go, thank God. But she gave me his cup, his chair and then his tea. I didn't know, mind you. We got a few choice pieces there,' he adds reflectively. The ultimate accolade.

Johnny – 'never paid tax in my life' – began working as a totter with his father at the age of 16. Then he acquired a lead statue and sold it to a Berkshire dealer for £30. So he bought books, sniffed furniture to get the smell of age and became a 'knocker' boy looking for antiques.

A knock on the door; 'Can I have a drink of water, please?' or 'Can I use your toilet?' The idea, he says, is to get inside and *never* mention what you're there for until you've crossed the doorstep. Once in, it's all 'down to psychology'.

Harry is 54. He, too dresses smartly and tends his sideboards lovingly. As a barrow boy, he says, he was the type to burn the toffee apples, call them coffee-flavoured and sell them just the same – 'Never Say Die'. Twenty years ago Harry, a respectable window-cleaner, sprained his back and went on the sick. He got used to tea and toast in bed and an afternoon of betting, he says, so he became a professional gambler. And eventually, still on the club – 'You need a little security in life' – he went back to 'big-time cleaning'. It worked well until the taxman got curious. Harry had to 'disappear'. A year ago he joined forces with Johnny.

Harry's house, a £8-a-week semi, is full of clocks because it also doubles as the storeroom. Four grandfather clocks (buying price around £120, selling price closer to double that) stand in the middle room, an army of mantel clocks rest shoulder to shoulder in the basement. Also scattered about are figurines, art-deco lamps, glasspanes and a table or two – much of it will go for export. The back room, the family dining room, closest to the kitchen and the teapot, is the 'office'. From there, each week, two advertisements are inserted in the local Portsmouth paper, one for clocks, the other for glass. The adverts act as calling cards, a legitimate excuse for entry.

The Negus version of Starsky and Hutch prefer to begin work in the local boozer on a Sunday morning where dealers come to buy and sell. They 'dick out' from time to time, look into the gloom of various car boots, make a sale and 'nip back in again before the foam on the pint is flattened'. Occasionally someone will come up to Johnny for advice. He never gives it.

On Sunday afternoon, the petrol tank is filled and cases packed; twice (once by 'the missus' with no fresh shirt, the second time by the men with a clean shirt included). At five the next morning, Johnny and Harry leave. Each week it will be a new area. This week it is Lincoln. A transport café breakfast, then the round of the antique shops begins. The open sesame is the one word, 'Trade'. 'A shopowner knows we're serious then,' Harry says. 'We're not the public, "just interested". We are *buying*.'

Playing it straight, the couple can buy in the knowledge that they stand to make £10 to £60 on every sale. But the bonus they like is the dealer new to the game or one who hasn't done his homework. Then ignorance serves to fatten the profit; at least most of the time. 'I spotted a 1921-4 medal a while back,' Johnny says, 'and gave a bloke £30. I knew it was worth treble that. I flew home, got out the books and found out it was 1925 I was after.' He shrugs. The medal was sold for what he had paid for it. The couple may make mistakes but they always break even. And in shop after shop, once the buying has been done, the chat turns to other things until the dealer asks, 'Got anything yourselves then?' It looks like his idea. But nine times out of ten, it is Johnny or Harry who have propelled the conversation. And a second deal is done.

On Monday evening after a phone call home it's out, in clean shirt, to the nearest game of roulette. Johnny and Harry collect gambling clubs like corporation men gather credit cards. It's a sign of success. Tuesday to Saturday is spent at home, wheeling and dealing, following up advertisements for the next week's trip. This week a man, made portly by his conspicuous money belt, arrives from Reading and £2,500 changes hands, all in cash. All in all, the lads end up with a couple of hundred to spend as they will. 'We've got problems,' Harry confides, over the Saturday night brandy and ginger – his concern underlined by heavy ringed fingers. 'Nowadays we go 400 miles and they say your lot were only here a few days ago. It makes you want to spit. But it stands to reason, don't it.' He adds philosophically a moment later: 'You can't mass produce antiques for bloody ever. Can you?' The question is meant seriously.

Roger Woddis

Howl of Anguish

(After Browning)

Dr Francis Crick is emigrating to the United States because of taxation.

Nobly, nobly Nobel victor
Doctor Francis slipped away,
Fled from heavy-duty Healey,
Fuming to the USA.

Crippled by the rate of taxes
He was called upon to pay,
Looking round his lab. at Cambridge,
Crick knew where his future lay.

'Here I squinted at the fruitfly,
Here I laboured night and day.
How can I abandon Britain?
How can I afford to stay?'

Anger bubbled in his test-tubes,
Tax-forms overflowed his tray;
Scientists who seek an answer
Cannot turn to God to pray.

What is it that makes him bitter?
Was he robbed, or should we say
Twisted by his double helix,
Governed by his DNA?

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First Person

Arthur Marshall

Oh I Say Thanks Awfully

Like many another loyal subject, I have kept by me the official list of the wedding gifts displayed to the public at St James's Palace on the occasion of the marriage of HRH The Princess Elizabeth to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten, RN, in November 1947, and now, in this joyous Jubilee Year, I have taken to wondering how they (the gifts) have been getting on. What, for example, of the 'dagger in beaded sheath', the 17 sets of doilies, the 'magic gem of the Orient' and the 'hand-made model of a cat', not to speak of the happy snap of the Dionne Quintuplets, kindly sent along by the Dionne Quintuplets? Presumably the 10 lbs of icing sugar, the turkey, the 4 dozen tins of salmon and the 500 cases of tinned pineapple have long since gone down the royal red lanes.

I had previously understood that it was not permissible to send presents to royalty and that they were always politely returned but I was evidently wrong. The more the merrier seems to have been the motto (there were 2,583 in all) and if I had sent in half a dozen egg cosies and three boxes of Turkish Delight, they would clearly have been acceptable. The skies opened and presents simply showered down. There is really only one way to describe the actual listing of the gifts. Higgledy-piggledy. Perhaps the descriptions of the offerings and the names of the donors were noted down just as they happened to turn up.

The gifts from the King and Queen and fellow royalties certainly appear first on the list and contain some surprises. We find that 45 'members of the royal family', including the Princess Royal and the King of Norway, clubbed together, if you please, and came through with nothing but a mahogany breakfront bookcase. A handsome one, I don't doubt, but surely not quite enough from such a large and rich team. Queen Mary, then pretty long in the tooth, provided 20 assorted gifts off her own bat. Was she, as people of her age often do, offloading? 'A Chinese screen and a miniature bookcase' sound like things that have been cluttering up the place and collecting dust for years and can now be got rid of. One of the Queen's presents to her daughter was toast-racks (just like you and me, you see), and though the King's present of 'a pair of guns' might cause anxious looks and raised eyebrows in lower strata of society, they are of course perfectly OK in a world where people like going bang-bang on the moors and need to have something to boom off with.

From the general public there were, naturally, duplications, it not having been possible to issue, as many ordinary families do, a list of acceptable presents to intending donors. There were also frequent multiplications, for example 14 prayer books, 22 bibles, 11 car rugs, 13 wedding cakes, 105 embroidered cloths (table, tea or tray), 156 handkerchiefs, and silk nightdresses galore. Strangest of all were the numbers of people, 74 of them, who felt called upon to send pairs of nylon stockings, one individual donor coughing up as many as 18. They provided between them 159 pairs. Whatever would Freud have to say to that?

Some items might be listed as 'Gifts, the usefulness of which is not immediately apparent'. 'Two collapsible umbrellas' are all right, provided collapsible means folding, but where to find in one's house the absolutely right spot for 'an aboriginal letter in carved wood', a wading stick, a pair of baby clogs, a Basuto bride's charm, 'an inscribed glass shrine on a marble base', and, most difficult to place, 'a paraphrase of the 23rd Psalm, mounted under glass', of all psalms the one that would least benefit from paraphrasing. And how on earth would a lady-in-waiting write to express grateful thanks for 'a reversible doll', a hurricane pipe, a gold bicycle mascot and 'a miniature harp in bog oak'? ('Her Royal Highness has asked me to thank you for the miniature harp in, if we mistake not, bog oak.')

There ought really to have been a prize for the most bizarre gift. High in the ratings would have been 'a hide mounted barometer, slung to hang in stirrup'. Stirrups to me mean horses and so what could be handier? The Princess, out riding and worried about the weather, has merely to dismount and take a swift dekko at the forecast. There was also 'a leather mounted calendar', similarly stirrup hung, so she could ascertain the date as well. Then there were 'two harmstrings from Uganda'. Whatever can harmstrings be? They don't sound like good news to me. I misread them first as 'hamstrings', items which must nowadays, sadly, be in all too full supply. Treasured and unique possessions came flooding in and all animal lovers will rejoice to find 'collar of the dog "Patty", the only British survivor of the Kabul massacre in 1879'. Quaint but interesting are 'a truncheon made from laburnum grown in Northern Ireland' and 'writing table accessories made from coal and decorated with nails from the shoes of the Princess's ponies'. And for an appetising, late post-theatre snack, how about raiding the larder for that 'piece of condensed soup' part of the stores in HMS Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar'? Just heat through in a saucepan, toss in a few croutons, and bring to table.

Things of the mind and books were by no means neglected and, anyway, they had to fill up that mahogany breakfront bookcase of which we spoke (and which still seems pretty mingy). The Aberdovey Women's Institute, whose anxious discussions one likes to imagine, sent along a copy of Berta Ruck's 'Tomboy in Lace', while Mrs St Aubyn Ratcliffe provided her very own 'Furry Folk and Fairies', and two editions of it, what's more. Indeed, the number of writers who decided to conquer their diffidence and bravely send in their own works is really very startling. There were as many as 56 of them, their donations and subjects covering a very wide field: 'Elephants Never Forget', 'The Medical Discoveries of Edward Bach', 'Ballet Education', 'Wedding Etiquette Complete', 'You and the Jury', 'The Finding of the Third Eye' and other treats that one rather doubts ever got very deeply dipped into.

Now, what would one have welcomed most oneself? Well, there were 12 bottles of sloe gin, six of ordinary, a bottle of rum and about a roomful of champagne. There were boxes of chocs and superb silver, glass, furniture and carpets. There was, touchingly, a bunch of violets. But the list is chiefly remarkable for the enormous number of objects which I really feel that I can rub along without: a plastic cushion, 43 lengths of tweed, 'a match holder in the form of a toadstool mounted with a silver frog' (a gift dreamt up by a very close descendant of the last Czar of all the Russias), five copies of a book called 'Daily Light', 'a shaped plastic table' (whatever can an unshaped table look like?), an oil painting of Leeds (a daunting subject until we discover that Leeds is a horse), a 'red velvet vestette', which I take to be a tiny waistcoat, a handmade figure of a coolie, one of Queen Victoria's slippers, a pair of 'Watajoy' travelling bags, a Tibetan incense burner, a bottle of Australian claret, a stinkwood chest, a pink satin suspender belt, 39 Loyal Addresses, a 'yellow hand-painted umbrella' and an ostrich egg.

This Ireland

☐ In spite of his tremendous wealth, Major McCalmont leads a comparatively simple life. He hunts with the Kilkenny Fox Hounds three days a week, spends a lot of the week in Dublin, and is well liked by his enormous staff. – *Sunday World* (Dermot McEvoy)

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Letters to the Editor

The Left and Growth

Sir, I remain unconvinced by Wilfred Beckerman's persuasive article (NS 18 March) that the problems posed by the limits to growth belong to an indefinitely hazy future. I confess to sharing with many other laymen the hunch that they are very imminent. In other terms, it seems to me very probable that we shall not be able to enjoy in the future the fast rates of growth of the last quarter-century.

One of the reasons for this is that our growth since the war seemed more problem-free than it really was because we were not meeting its full costs. In applying a number of technologies we neglected the pollution effects until they reached thresholds we couldn't ignore. So many things were marketed more cheaply than their real welfare cost, if I can use this intuitively-satisfying but vague expression, Motor cars are an example. Now present technologies may have to be replaced by new ones (the internal combustion car may again be an example). But if we take account of the real costs from the beginning, it is unlikely that we will be able to match the oil-fired expansion that is now faltering.

Of course, technological development is in principle unpredictable. It's *possible* that we are on the verge of discovering an incredibly cheap, pollution-free source of energy, for instance. But this is surely not the odds-on probability. Of course, we are guessing in this domain to some extent. And here we are *all* in a sense laymen; since to make a fully informed estimate you would have to have mastered *all* the relevant technological frontiers where pollution/ecological or resource limits might arise. My guess is that sources of abundant cheap energy belong to the world of science fiction rather than the hard, unyielding reality of life on this planet.

Perhaps, instead of putting the point in terms of slower growth, one should speak of real net growth, where account is taken of the full welfare costs of production. Then the thesis would be that the feasible rates of real net growth are slower than we thought. So that we'll have to resign ourselves to slower growth of our GNPs in the future. And all this doesn't touch on the political and economic reasons for expecting slower rates of growth so well adumbrated in Wilfred Beckerman's article. But why should slower growth worry us? Beckerman confesses bafflement at the paradox that those who think continued fast growth undesirable are made even more miserable by the thought that it is impossible. But the grounds for misery are not far to seek. Our Western societies rely on growth to cope with their inner tensions. In particular, the demands for greater equality have been met with growth which can allow us to raise the living standards of the poorer without equalising income. We can pay Paul without robbing Peter. No wonder we are apprehensive about this escalator slowing down. Because then minimum social justice requires that one squeeze differentials. And the social tensions this produces need no elaboration in contemporary Britain.

But growth is not only our favoured solution, it is part of the problem (which is surely what Brigitte Bardot *ought* to have said about sex). This is a host of ways; among which: that fast-growth societies tend to entrench and generalise a sense of the good life as continually increasing consumer standards and this makes difficult the progressive distribution of the fruits of growth; that growth societies tend to drive out cheap technologies with expensive ones, so that it costs more to survive in a rich society than in a poor one.

So the following appalling prospect opens up: that we remain hooked on growth, that is, that we retain a fast-growth culture with all the expectations and demands that that entails, but become incapable of delivering the growth itself. And, worse, that our frantic efforts to recover the fast growth entrench the culture without achieving their end. If this is our situation, then socialist thought should be exploring how we can learn to live with slower growth (or a feasible rate of real net growth) without tearing ourselves apart. And surely only a socialist form of society could cope with this. And *this* is a problem not for the indefinite future but now.

CHARLES TAYLOR

All Souls College
Oxford

Sir, I have read with considerable interest the debate between Jeremy Bugler and Wilfred Beckerman on the merits, or otherwise, of growth. I am a layman in most of the disciplines relevent to the debate and, according to Professor Beckerman, my competence to comment may be in some doubt. However, I have never thought much of the argument from authority, believing that expertise and wisdom do not always go hand in hand.

I confess that I do have some difficulty in evaluating some of the arguments put forward by the environmentalist lobby. I don't know, for example, how you prove that burning the world's coal reserves at a rate necessary to support a 4 per cent exponential growth rate will inevitably lead to a heating up of the global atmosphere; or how bad the effects would be if such a heating up took place. But then I am not a scientist. Nor, on the other hand, is Professor Beckerman, who states that 'some estimates suggest that the top mile of the earth's crust contains enough mineral resources to keep us going for 100 million years'.

Some of the statements made by the environmentalist lobby seem to me to reflect a despair which does not accord with my concept of man able to control his future. Some of the statements made on the other side imply an optimism bordering on the irresponsible. Both extremes deflect consideration away from the crux of the issue – does growth for its own sake provide a solution to the problems of an unequal society?

Rowtow's 'take-off into self-sustained growth' occurred in this country against a set of values which eventually led to an amelioration of the appalling conditions growth had brought to large sections of our population. Today we appear to lack the certainty in our moral standpoint which would enable us to channel growth in a direction which would diminish the inequalities of the world's society.

It was the apparent need of English and French manufacturers and politicians to express their commitment to the concept of a growth society which led to Concorde. Whether or not Concorde is using scarce resources is to some degree immaterial – Concorde is unnecessary. A society geared to growth seemingly has to express its raison d'être by producing costly and unnecessary artefacts. A retreat from growth as an ideal may give us time, inclination and resources to create a more equal, tension-free and, hence, lasting society.

E. F. CASS

548 Wilbraham Road
Manchester

Sir, Although not an economist, I endorse Jeremy Bugler's argument for a no-growth society (NS 11 March). Since, as he says, textile workers here in Hong Kong can produce cotton shirts (and high-fashion garments, too, as witness the annual Ready-to-Wear Festival) which retail for much less than those made in Lancashire, why continue to make them in Britain? And if Japanese cars are indeed capturing a sizeable share of the market in Europe because they are cheap, sturdy, reliable, and have a good servicing network, why not concentrate on making buses at Leyland and leave the manufacture of private cars to Detroit and Japan?

It was actually the discovery that a plastic tray made in the UK would sell here for several times the price of a HK-made one, that prompted the thought that perhaps now is the time for Britain to phase out the manufacture of some goods the price of which is no longer competitive in the world market. Obviously there are some quality products for which Britain has a deserved reputation or which are unique, but surely it is no longer economical to manufacture, for instance, certain shirts and other clothes when good quality garments are produced much more cheaply in Asia.

Finding an alternative means of providing employment – as well as taking a glance back to see if there is anything we can learn from the course of industrialisation throughout the 19th century – should be our pre-occupation and that of our leaders as we enter the last quarter of the 20th century. Services for which Britain has long been known, such as banking and insurance, could be continued, and there could be a renewed effort to provide cheap public transportation which would improve the quality of life for so many people. Let's revive the network of trains and buses which once made us all neighbours. A greater emphasis on agriculture, too, might enable Britain to be more self-sufficient. And as an alternative to the nightmare series of new power stations mentioned by Jeremy Bugler, there could be concentrated research into the use of wind and wave energy as well as solar power.

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Sir, Wilfred Beckerman (NS 18 March) again advances his interesting view that man's ingenuity can make a finite world infinite. However, in his article he reveals the slender theoretical thread on which this argument hangs. 'By the time another hundred million years have gone by, I'm sure we will think of something' amounts more to an act of faith rather than an argument. The good professor says he spends his time teaching students not to accept other people's authority without very good reasons – his students would be advised to treat such 'credos' with even more caution.

It was reported a number of years ago that Professor Beckerman was leaving the 'no-growth' debate in order to devote his energies to the problem of income distribution. It seems that he is in fact not prepared to face the issue of real redistribution of wealth, and prefers to keep the poorer sections of society happy by increasing the size of the cake. Not a radically socialist proposal. I doubt whether in the coming years of scarcity the poor will be fobbed off with this 'solution'.

BOGUMIL N. ZABA

Department of Biochemistry & Soil Science
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Sir, In his article Wilfred Beckerman makes it clear that he is only 'concerned with the welfare of all those people who are already here on Earth, or whose arrival is more or less inevitable'. Why, then, does he try to demonstrate that indefinitely continued material growth

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is possible, since he appears to lack any understanding of what it involves? One example demonstrates the apparent innumeracy that affects Professor Beckerman (I assume that it is not his usual condition) on matters of growth. He says that 'some estimates suggest that the top mile of the earth's crust contains enough mineral resources to keep us going for 100 million years', but if we take the very conservative figure of 5,000 million tonnes per year of material now being processed for minerals, and apply to it the modest growth rate of 2 per cent per annum, we find that 1,000 years hence – not 100 million – the top mile of the earth's crust is being processed every year.

I entirely agree that an end to material growth will impose great strains on society, though I do not deduce from this that growth will always be possible. The strains are likely to be worse if we believe that we could have growth but are being frustrated than if we recognise that the real world, unlike Professor Beckerman's model, just happens to be made that way.

JOHN DAVOLL
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Naughty Nudes

Sir, Since western art has never barred images of the human body, Richard Cork (NS 25 March) has a lot of history and pictures to cancel in his campaign against life-drawing. And since most men (and certainly most men painters) have liked women, and therefore painted their bodies with a sense of their sexuality, there is plenty to object to in any art gallery by those who assume that any female nude painted by a man is 'the image of the helpless pawn in a male fantasy world'. (Anyone who thinks this has kept his eyes shut from the Venus de Milo on.)

Whatever the historic associations of artists and models, what on earth is 'sexist' in the act of painting a naked body? Would it be any less 'sexist' if Georg Eisler's well-selected and representative anthology of 20th-century nudes of both sexes contained some figures by women artists, whose comparative lack of interest in the theme is, in this century, evidently not due to any lack of opportunity to paint it? Are their sitters any less passive and bored than men's? Is there anything in Eisler's notes on how to draw nudes which is useful only for artists with penises?

Certainly any collection of nudes, including Kenneth Clark's, will be treated by some as a collection of sex-pictures. It is also undeniable that some artists draw nudes as sex objects. (The only actual example Cork quotes from this collection is homosexual). On the other hand, if one were asked for a textbook illustration of 'sexism', would it not be something like Cork's belief that the very act of painting a woman's body *con amore* degrades her to a 'sacrificial sex-offering'?

E. J. HOBSBAWM

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Labour and Europe

Sir, Mr Phillip Whitehead MP (NS 25 March) argues in favour of direct elections to the EEC Assembly. He also says he accepts the Referendum: does he?

Direct elections are of course seen as a major step towards an EEC federal political union: that is the view of the European Movement, and the view also of EEC 'top brass' according to Ron Hayward last year. Yet the 1975 Government White Paper, 'Membership of the European Community – Report on Renegotiation' (Cmnd. 6003), said quite specifically: 'The Government do not accept any commitment to any sort of federal structure in Europe.'

The Government's pre-Referendum pamphlet, 'Britain's New Deal in Europe', made no mention of direct elections. It emphasised the continued right of veto in the Council of Ministers, and the continued assent of Parliament as the condition for continued membership of the EEC – both inimical to any federal political structure.

It seems quite clear that the Government were not appealing to the electorate for a verdict in favour of EEC political union. If direct elections are intended as a major step towards such a union – then by definition there is no mandate for direct elections. If Mr Whitehead truly accepts the 1975 Referendum, he cannot therefore support direct elections.

Furthermore, it seems that Mr Whitehead needs reminding that on 29 September last year his own party conference – the Labour Party conference – rejected direct elections by 4,016,000 to 2,264,000. Surely he is not going to react like certain leading members of the Government (doubtless fortified for the moment by the new Steel alliance) and ignore that vote?

IVOR R. JOHNS

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What Must We Do?

Sir, 'A very interested' reader of 'What We Must Do' might well ask Mr Magee (Letters 18 March) how in the name of balanced discussion the public schools can rate no mention in the section concerned with 'a Democratic Socialist Approach' to education. Is it irrelevant and unsophisticated in the 1970s to recall the words of Tawney well over 30 years ago (in his article 'The Problem of the Public Schools')? He wrote:

> The fundamental issue is simple. It is whether the existence of a group of schools reserved for the children of the comparatively prosperous, and in a large measure isolated from the public school system of education, is or is not, as the world is today, in the best interests of the nation. It cannot be decided by the venerable device of describing privileges as liberties.

L. LAUTENBERG

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Defence Costs

Sir, There are perhaps two omissions in Robin Cook's article (NS 25 March) which, if brought to the attention of readers, throw the Defence sub-committee's Report into a different light.

(1) It is true that the committee accepted the inevitability of the Defence Review but it was our feeling that the cumulative effect of the Defence Review proposals, taken with the three cuts imposed in 1973-74 and the four cuts imposed since, give rise to concern at the effects on our front line capability.

(2) The contrast between the figures for BAOR in 1965-1966 and the subsequent figures, do not appear to allow either for inflation or for the change in exchange rates. When these factors are taken into account the drain across the exchanges has not increased so markedly *in real terms* over the last ten years.

GEOFFREY FINSBERG

House of Commons

The Queen's Pardon

Sir, Cassells have commissioned me to write a book about the system by which the Queen, and some Heads of Government abroad, graciously forgive non-offenders for not having done something that they didn't do. I want to include a chapter about the use, in fiction and drama, of royal and presidential pardons as the culmination to a story. At present I know about *The Tragedy of Chabot,* the 16th century play by Chapman and Shirley; Trollope's *John Caldigate* (a perfect example); and *The Winslow Boy,* which won't really do because it is founded on fact and was, anyway, a jury acquittal. It seems to me a self-evident theme for novel and play, and yet I can find no others. I should be most grateful if anyone could help with suggestions.

C. H. ROLPH

Rushett Edge
Bramley
Guildford

Electoral Reform

Can you continue to live with these facts:—

- that nearly 300 MPs were elected with the support of less than half the people in their constituencies?
- that 18 per cent of electors are represented by less than 3 per cent of MPs?
- that both major parties have 'won' general elections, even though the other party had more votes?
- that many otherwise open-minded people justify all this on the grounds of 'practicality'?

At the first public meeting of the Campaign for Electoral Reform, these and other questions will be asked and answered by

LORD BLAKE
JO GRIMOND MP
LORD HARLECH
BRIAN WALDEN MP

Place: Caxton Hall (Great Hall), Westminster, London SW1.
Date: Wednesday, April 6, 1977 at 7.30 p.m.
Admission: Free.

To the Campaign for Electoral Reform, 12 Upper Belgrave Street, London SW1.

☐ I would like to know more about Electoral Reform.

☐ I support Electoral Reform. Please add my name to your Campaign Register of Supporters and Mailing List. I enclose £2.

Please tick appropriate box.

Name_____

Address _____

Campaign for Electoral Reform

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Why has Europe adopted the 20AX

Because this new 110° colour tube system is the most important advance in set design since the arrival of colour TV itself. Tube bulkiness and circuit complexities have been 'designed-out'. The result? Slimmer, elegant, more reliable sets which warm up fast, maintaining a first-class colour picture over a much longer period.
20AX – it's known as 'Eurocolour' across the Channel – is a dramatically simpler way to get colour TV precisely right. It is a technological advance which represents more than twenty years research and development and marks a new era in television electronics design. No other 110° colour tube system in the world is so advanced.

What is the 20AX system?

It is the only fully self-converging slimline 110° tube system available for picture tubes in 18, 20, 22 and 26 inch sizes.

How do ordinary TV sets work?

Until now the inside of most colour TV screens has been coated with a million dots of red, green and blue phosphors, arranged in tiny triangles.

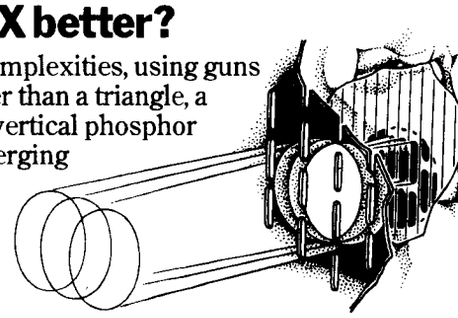
The dots become a colour picture when they are made to glow by firing beams of electrons at them from three electron guns housed in the neck of the picture tube.

The guns, one for each colour, are arranged, like the dots, in a triangle.

The beams are guided to their targets through thousands of tiny holes in what is known as a shadow mask. Getting the triangle of beams to land precisely on a triangle of dots is known as convergence and, for a perfect picture, this has to be done across the whole screen, twenty-five times a second. To achieve this, many extra electronic components are needed and up to eighteen complex convergence adjustments have to be made before a set leaves the factory.

So how is 20AX better?

20AX gets rid of the complexities, using guns arranged in a line rather than a triangle, a slotted shadow mask, vertical phosphor stripes and a self-converging deflection yoke. The result is perfect colour registration from the centre of the picture right out to the



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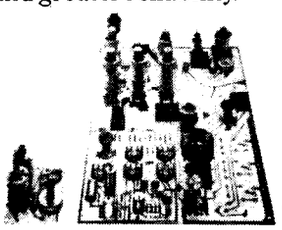
enthusiastically colour TV system?

corners. The 20AX system achieves this automatically, eliminating many components and adjustments required in conventional sets.

What does this mean for the viewer?

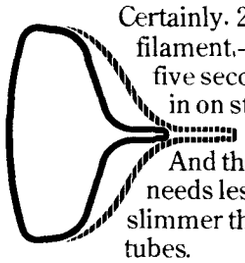
For a start, the fewer the components, the fewer there are to go wrong. But there's more to 20AX than that. Not only does it give an excellent picture with perfect colour registration right out to the corners, but this quality is maintained for a long, long time. In other words, better picture quality and greater reliability.



20AX system Conventional system

Compare the complexity of these typical correction circuits.

Any other advantages?



Certainly. 20AX has the bonus of a 'quick warm-up' filament – which means a picture within about five seconds, without leaving the set plugged in on stand-by, which is safer and saves electricity.

And the new Mullard 20AX 110° tube needs less space, so 20AX sets are slimmer than sets with conventional tubes.

What does this mean for Britain?

Mullard, now Britain's only TV tube maker, has invested £7 million in re-equipping three of its factories to produce the new tubes and components wanted for 20AX. This investment is already paying off in a number of ways.

In 1976, in addition to the £6 million worth of 20AX tubes and components which Mullard exported to Europe, British-made TV sets – using 20AX components from Mullard – were capturing a share of this discerning market. Europe demands sets which provide high reliability and embody the very latest technology. With 20AX British set manufacturers were well able to satisfy these requirements.

We are proud that 20AX is spearheading the British TV export drive for both the set manufacturers and Mullard. And, of course, on both counts British jobs are protected.

20AX looks like a great leap forward

It is indeed. So when you come to buy or hire your next colour TV, demonstrate your knowledge, ask the sales person about 20AX. You're bound to see the 20AX symbol in your TV showroom soon.

Mullard

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Edward Upward

The Resolute Anti-Hero

Christopher and His Kind by CHRISTOPHER ISHERWOOD *Eyre Methuen* £4.95

Among those British-born young writers of the 1930s who have come to be regarded as typical of that decade, Christopher Isherwood was one of the less politically-minded. His revolt against upper-class beliefs and attitudes, and especially against those of the 'landed gentry' (that 'tribe' into which he himself had been born), was personal rather than political. At his prep school, where unfortunately for him the headmaster and two of the staff were relatives of his, he had been told to try to be worthy of his father, a regular army officer who had been killed in action at the beginning of May 1915, and Christopher grew up to feel an increasing hostility towards the ideals he believed his Hero-Father stood for. He became convinced that unless he rejected these they would destroy his individuality, prevent him for ever from developing along the lines that were natural to him. In his new non-fictional book, *Christopher and his Kind*, he describes the experiences his revolt led him into from the time he left England to live in Germany to the time he left Europe, seven months before the outbreak of the second world war, to live in the United States. Only after the war when he could return as a naturalised American citizen on visits to an England which 'had ceased to be imperial and had become a minor power with a cosmopolitan population' was he able for the first time in his life to feel love towards this country of his birth.

The anthropologist John Layard, whom Auden had met in Berlin, had said: 'There is only one sin: disobedience to the inner law of our own nature.' For Isherwood these were life-shaking words. But when in his earlier autobiographical book *Lions and Shadows* he suggests that his chief motive for going to Berlin was to meet Layard, he is expediently avoiding the truth. He went there to find the life that Auden had promised him. To Isherwood, Berlin meant Boys. Nevertheless, it would be an oversimplification to assume that he believed boys were all he needed in order to be able to obey the law of his own nature – though this present book, as its title implies, is mainly about his homosexuality and his relations with other male homosexuals. There is something that is even more necessary to him than living as a homosexual, and what this is becomes clear during the course of the book.

In a significant passage near the beginning of the first chapter, after describing how he made love for the first and only time in his life with a woman and very much enjoyed it, he asks himself why he prefers boys. It would be a lot more convenient if he could prefer girls. Society would accept him. Girls are what the State and the Church and the Law and the Press and the Medical Profession endorse. His mother endorsed them too and was 'silently brutishly willing him to get married and breed grandchildren for her'. Her will was the will of Nearly Everybody, and in their will was his death:

> But I'll admit this – even if my nature were like theirs, I should still have to fight them in one way or another. If boys did not exist, I should have to invent them.

Isherwood adds at this point that psychologists might accuse him of repressed heterosexuality, and that he had been called half-jokingly by Auden 'a heter with good taste', but that during nearly 40 years since then he has not defected from homosexuality.

Significant too is the Berlin passage describing his first viewing of the freakish exhibits (mainly homosexual) in the Museum which formed part of Dr Magnus Hirschfeld's world-famous Institute For Sexual Science, and Isherwood's first meeting at lunch there with the staff and the patients or guests of the Institute – among whom are quietly-behaved transvestites and a boy with fully-formed female breasts – all of them members of what Hirschfeld had named 'The Third Sex' and all so respectable and serious and so different from the boys of the Berlin boy-bars, who were really heterosexuals in need of the money they could earn by selling themselves to males. He says he was embarrassed by the respectability of 'these freakish fellow-tribesmen' of his but that he was forced to recognise his kinship with them; and soon in fact he moved into a vacant room in the Institute which he was able to rent from Hirschfeld's sister.

Another very revealing passage occurs in his account of his life on the Greek island of St Nicholas where, after Hitler's coming to power in Germany, he took the German boy Heinz, with whom he had been living for five years. This island, rented from a nearby mainland village by the syphilitic English archaeologist Francis who was having a house built there – Christopher had got to know him at Hirschfeld's Institute – seemed so nearly uninhabitable with its heat, dirt, bad food and worse water, stinging flies, swarming rats and Francis's retinue of delinquent catamites, one of whom raped a duck and several of whom were too interested in Heinz for Christopher's liking, that Christopher wondered how he could ever have imagined that he would be able to work on his novel there. He shared a tent with Heinz, and relations between them became increasingly strained, until Christopher reached the point of writing in his diary, 'I suppose we shall have to part, but it shan't be till I want to. I must leave him, as I left Otto, in my own time.'

Was Christopher what he had sometimes been called, and had felt flattered to be called, the 'monster' that in this chapter about his time on the Greek island he himself says he was? Auden once told him that no one else he had ever met was crueller or more unscrupulous. This, even though it was said jokingly, was most unjust. Isherwood's attitude to boys was very different from that of the usual British homosexual visitor to the Berlin boy-bars, who while sentimentally expecting gratitude and even love from the boys whose bodies he hired did not want the one thing the boys genuinely had to offer – their friendship. In his diary while he was living on the island Isherwood also said, 'There is a core of detachment in me.' Inner detachment was what he needed if he was to go on writing, and unless he did go on he would be lost. To be a writer was even more essential to him than to be a homosexual. Creativity was the supreme law of his own nature it would be death for him to disobey – though he never explicitly says so in this book.

He does not say so even in the final chapter when he describes how, as he and Auden were walking on the deck of the ship that was taking them to America in January 1939, he suddenly knew, with relief, that he was breaking free not only from the England of his Hero-Father and his Holy-Widow mother, and from the Germany which the Nazis had poisoned, but also from the anti-Fascist struggle. In future he would be a pacifist. He felt that his experiences had hardened him to endure the outcry that would be raised against him and Auden as 'war-dodgers'. And though he must have been aware that his closest heterosexual friend, Edward Upward, who had always approved of his homosexuality, would bitterly disapprove of his abandonment of left-wing politics, he must also have felt that their friendship, founded on the indestructible world of imagination they had shared at Cambridge and on their continuing interest in each other's writing, would survive: it would be destroyed only if he were to give active support to some rightist political organisation in America, and this he would never do. Among the hopes he had about the life he would be able to live in America the main one must have been that he would become free there to develop along the lines that were natural to him as a writer. This hope has been realised, and not least through his having written *Christopher and his Kind*, which is outstanding both in its literary quality and in its historical-sociological interest.

Its most impressive chapters are not unexpectedly those dealing with some of the persons and the things that he was deterred by anti-homosexual laws from describing in depth, or even sometimes from mentioning at all, in *Goodbye to Berlin* and in his first post-war novel *Prater Violet*: Dr Magnus Hirschfeld's Institute for Sexual Science, over the entrance to which was a Latin inscription meaning Sacred to Love and Sorrow (how apt and how moving this seems when one thinks of the exhibits in the adjoining Sexual Museum); Dr Hirschfeld himself, whose seriousness Christopher at first found irritating but whom he later

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came to admire and even to regard as heroic; Gerald Hamilton, the prototype of Mr Norris, no longer seen now mainly as an amusing oddity, though Isherwood avoids believing him to have been a treacherous scoundrel who having promised to arrange the purchase of Mexican citizenship for Heinz at a price of £1,000 (which was paid by Isherwood's mother) played some part in bringing about the arrest and imprisonment of Heinz by the Nazis; and Viertel, named Bergmann in *Prater Violet*, an Austrian film director whom Isherwood helped to make a sentimental film called *Little Friend* – the chapter in which their relationship is described is perhaps the finest in the book.

But the book is something much more than a collection of wonderful chapters. It is a complete and subtly constructed work of art, building up to the climax of the arrest of Heinz, and it needs to be considered as an artistic whole if its stature is to be properly appreciated. It is written with the lucidity, the intelligence and the wit that we have come to expect from Isherwood at his best, in a style that very occasionally verges on the epigrammatic (though without giving any impression of artificiality), as when he says of Hamilton that 'like all deeply dishonest people, he made the relatively honest look hypocritical and cowardly' – a comment which is reminiscent of what Marx said about the character of Rameau's nephew in Diderot's masterpiece. The real people Isherwood writes about, even those who have only a minor place in this autobiography, spring as vividly to life for the reader as the characters in his novels do. *Christopher and his Kind* shows Isherwood the writer at the height of all his powers.

Alan Ryan

Rule Book

Taking Rights Seriously by RONALD DWORKIN *Duckworth* £9.80

The 13 essays which make up *Taking Rights Seriously* neatly reflect the fact that Ronald Dworkin is an American and the Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Oxford. For half of these essays are reprinted from sober law journals, and are devoted to criticising the shortcomings of the theory of law defended by his predecessor in the chair, H. L. A. Hart, while all but two of the remainder come from the *New York Review of Books*, and are polemical assaults on various sorts of American illiberalism. It goes without saying that what unites them is not a conviction that Hart's book on *The Concept of Law* either did or might justify former President Nixon's views on racial segregation, the rights of draft resisters, and the intellectual and moral qualities of Chief Justice Warren. But, negatively, Dworkin certainly does think that anyone who subscribes to the kind of legal positivism which Hart defends fails to appreciate the full resources of the law as a barrier to tyranny and as an instrument of social reform.

Dworkin recognises that the achievement of Hart's account of what makes laws laws is that it disembarrasses legal positivism of the idea that laws are commands or, in effect, standing threats, issued by a sovereign state to its subjects. By stressing that law is a matter of rules and rules about making rules, Hart made it possible to see how customary law could genuinely be law, though commanded by no one, and introduced a new degree of flexibility and realism into legal positivism. But, on two central points, *The Concept of Law* stood firmly in the tradition of Bentham and Austin – what legal rights a man possesses is a matter of what rights he has acquired through legislation or explicit recognition in the courts, and there may well be cases where such legislation and such recognition yield determinate answer to what rights a man has. In such hard cases there is nothing for it but to make up new rules; if Bentham's hope of providing such a comprehensive legal code that 'judge-made law' would be unnecessary is illusory, then one just has to put up with the fact that judicial legislation is an element in every legal system, and recognise that this is unalarming most of the time, because the judges' room for manoeuvre is limited by what is already firmly decided.

It is these two contentions that Dworkin rejects; in three essays on rules and hard cases, he argues that even where two judges might rationally disagree about what the right answer is to a question of law, it is a condition of making sense of how they argue, and of what they think they are doing, that we presuppose that they are looking for an answer which is in some sense there to be discovered. The attractions of this view are plain; when two parties get into court in a difficult case, they are looking for a declaration of what rights they had against one another all along. A decision imposes an unwelcome duty on one or other of them, and the losing party would find it intolerable to suppose that he had been perfectly within his rights in acting as he did – since the successful party had had at that time no rights against him – and yet was now being penalised for so doing. Dworkin thinks that we need to supplement any talk of rules with the recognition that a legal system also embodies principles which, taken together with the rules of settled law leave judges with no discretion about the answer they may come to. In one of the two new essays in this book, Dworkin defends himself against the suggestion that if as a matter of fact a case could as readily be decided one way as another, it is a myth that there really is a right answer 'out there'. Dworkin himself seems anxious not to reify the law, and the question of what exactly it commits us to if we go along with Dworkin's objectivism is left in the air, as is the question of how we can know whether a particular legal system is complete enough to indeed always possess one right answer.

The point of stressing the role of principles in the law is, at least in part, to defend a theory of rights of the kind Bentham dismissed as nonsense on stilts. And here there is a considerable tension between a full-blown theory of natural rights, with its declaration that no unjust law is a law at all, and a much more local, American claim, that the terms of the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments introduced moral arguments into the determination of what is the law. On the issues which dominated American politics from the middle Sixties to the departure of Nixon, Dworkin is immensely good value, even when he is not entirely persuasive; he defends the Supreme Court against enthusiasts for 'strict construction' with great verve – in essence, he says that the requirements of the Constitution are not altered when the court decides that 'equal protection', say, requires school busing, or entitles district courts to demand new arrangements for registering voters. The Constitution does not enshrine the Founding Fathers' own conceptions of equality, due process, the cruelty and unusualness of punishment or whatever; judges are enjoined to strike down *cruelty*, and their own conceptions of what constitutes cruelty are not mere quirks which

"funny and moving
It will give much
pleasure"
Sunday Telegraph

PAUL SCOTT

STAYING ON

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they unavoidably bring into court, but the result of the considered judgment which it is precisely their duty to exercise.

To the usual objection that this confides legislative power to the unelected, Dworkin replies that it does nothing of the sort; the judiciary is obliged to defend the *rights* of citizens, and this is quite different from deciding what new rules public policy would require. Indeed, the point of taking rights seriously is to set limits to the extent to which individuals can be used or misused for the sake of public policy. Unreconstructed Benthamites will probably think that Dworkin's discussion of such issues as the right of draft resisters to break the laws governing the draft makes a familiar, 18th-century mess of the point that they had no *legal* right to do so, but were quite right to do so all the same; they will certainly suspect that Dworkin is none too clear about the relationship between legal systems in general and the American legal system in particular; and they will no doubt nourish unworthy suspicions about the extent to which Dworkin's opinions are a blend of an enthusiasm for John Rawls's view on justice and a corresponding lack of enthusiasm for the US Congress's attitude to fundamental social reform. But, like everyone who opens the book, they will admire his intelligence, energy and lucidity, and will be glad to have such engaging (in all possible senses) pieces of argument collected in one place.

Eric Korn

Beastly Foreigner

The Naturalized Animals of the British Isles by CHRISTOPHER LEVER *Hutchinson* £7.50

If you walk through Coathy Butts, on a summer evening late, and hear the sound of distant hooves, drumming along a hard road – it isn't the Old Lost Way through the Woods, or the Gentleman passing by, but simply a Mongolian gerbil (or jird), signalling its lust to the indifferent Isle of Wight. What is it doing there? Well, gerbils (or jirds), along with hamsters, guinea-pigs and white rats, were part of the cast of a television film called *Tales of the River Bank*; and when, in 1973, the film-makers had finished with them, the non-union actors were turned out – turned down is the trade term, but who could turn down a gerbil when it looks him in the eye? Unpredictably, they flourished. Such mad indifference to consequences must be rare even in a television company; Mr Lever, ever a fair man, describes the creatures as attractive and endearing, albeit carriers of bubonic plague, bilharziasis and rabies.

Not all guests are so dubious; and it is a rare pleasure to find a naturalist recording gain, not loss, dispersal and not extinction. The brief interim between the end of the Ice Age and the sinking of the land bridge to Europe left the British Isles poor in vertebrate species; later enrichments, deliberate or fortuitous, benign or catastrophic, are recorded in this compendious, handsome, enjoyably discursive, and thoroughly documented book, generously produced and notably cheap.

Immigration began early: goats, mice and fallow deer in the Bronze Age; in Norman times the rabbit, the pheasant and the black rat, which had a free – if lethal – run for a few hundred years before the Norway rat came scampering down the Ratcliffe Highway or according to legend, ashore with William of Orange at Torbay or, according to another, with George I in 1714. In the 18th century, when it was generally assumed that nature was ideally planned for man's benefit, but could be improved by any prudent landowner, the quarters of the globe were searched for shootable creatures, while the 19th century saw the self-confident excesses of the Acclimatisation Society, with its visions of a joint of eland in every larder, and wapitis and wonga-wonga birds roaming the shires. The results were often calamitous: there were scores of separate introductions of the grey squirrel before its pestilential nature was understood, even if it is not guilty of the Powellite charge of driving out the native red squirrel. Not good intentions, but greed and slovenliness are responsible for the more recent spread of the coypu, just contained in Broadland by the sinister-sounding Coypu Control, and the mink, which will probably soon be ranging ravenously over the whole country.

But what heart does not leap up to learn of two firmly established wallaby colonies, of goldfish in the Thames, that parakeets are a familiar sight around Gravesend, or that the dormouse still hangs on, albeit by the skin of its tail, in the Chilterns? (Has anyone recently tried Apicius's recipe for honeyed dormouseburger? The Romans were great dormouse-snobs, claiming to recognise what hill they came from, and no doubt occasionally making the *glirarius* take one back because it was corked.) Our lives are brightened by a glimpse of the mandarin duck – which may survive in Britain longer than in China, where the habitat has become inimical to mandarins – or by exotic sounds: the bell-like 'poo, poo of the midwife toad, the 'brek-ek-ek koax' of *Rana ridibunda*, the short hysterical laugh of the Little Owl; to say nothing of the cock capercaille, reintroduced after the native stock had died out, whose call commences with a rapid resonant rattling sound, followed by the noise of a cork being drawn from a bottle, the impression of water being squirted from a siphon, and finally the sound of muffled knife grinding. (What the hen capercaille feels is not recorded.)

I have a confession to make. There's a colony of South African clawed toads near Freshwater, released in 1967 by a Mr Frank Royce, according to the author. Maybe, but a couple of years earlier a professor at a nearby laboratory, never a man to miss an opportunity, bought a herd of this species from the Family Planning Association, which had found less finicky methods of pregnancy testing. He envisaged research; I was hungry and undiscriminating and for months lived on toad thighs (culinary note; don't put salt on freshly killed *cuisses*; the ionic disturbance makes them leap around the kitchen, a macabre sight); I may have imagined this, but I think I once took out half a dozen on the hoof for a barbecue, and lost a few on the way. You'll thank me in the hungry Eighties.

Adrian Lyttelton

The Wife

My Truth by EDDA MUSSOLINI CIANO as told to Alberto Zarca *Weidenfeld* £6.95

Edda Ciano could be a tragic figure. Her husband was executed for treachery to her father. With her mother, Donna Rachele, egging Mussolini on to vengeance, the family tragedy is stark enough. But Edda scarcely measures up to the role of a tragic heroine. It is possible to be moved by her desperate efforts to save her husband at the last minute, using his famous diaries as a bargaining counter. But reading this book is like watching a minor starlet play Antigone. Galeazzo Ciano was outstanding among European statesmen for his superficiality, but on the showing of this book he was a deep thinker compared to his wife. She was happy about Hitler's success in 1933, and later took a 'charming boat trip' with him. Goebbels she found captivating and sexy, in spite of his unimpressive physique. Altogether she seems to have accepted the overblown luxury of Nazi life as meeting the exacting standards of a regular member of the salon of Countess Pecci Blunt. Although she was loyally anti-British, one of her proudest moments was the 'perfect curtsey' she made to George V. She makes it clear that she had no anti-Semitic prejudices, but she does complain a lot about being pestered by tiresome Jews who wanted their property back after the war.

Nothing very new about Galeazzo Ciano emerges from his wife's recollections of him. In a period dominated by monsters, Ciano had the misfortune to be human. He was an amiable if extraordinarily vain hedonist in a world of obsessed power-seekers. He had some genuine Fascist convictions, but they were, so to speak, inherited rather than independently acquired, since his father, Admiral Costanzo, was one of the principal dignitaries (and profiteers) of the regime. Undeniably handsome, Ciano reminds one of the villain in a British film of the period: the smooth character who annoys the hero by dancing with his wife, and is later discovered to be after the secret plans. Indeed Fascist foreign policy did make burglary into an important instrument of diplomacy.

The only serious issue raised by Edda's recollections is that of Mussolini's responsibility for her husband's death. The version she gives is inconsistent. She says that she is convinced that Mussolini did not personally decide to try Ciano, and only accepted the trial of Verona because he thought that he would be able to intervene later on to avoid his execution. But she admits that her efforts after the trial to persuade the Duce to relent had no effect. The truth is that it was not the Germans

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who decided on Ciano's execution, but Mussolini, who wanted to show them how tough he was. He could guess at Hitler's disillusioned verdict that 'the Duce is not a revolutionary like the Führer or Stalin', and he wanted to prove him wrong. Edda's version does not square with what we know about Mussolini's attitude either before the trial, when he said that 'for me, Ciano has been dead for some time', or afterwards, when he appeared to observers completely calm and unmoved. *My* truth, yes; but not necessarily anyone else's.

Mervyn Jones

Tales of Terror

The Carlos Complex by CHRISTOPHER DOBSON and RONALD PAYNE *Hodder & Stoughton* £5.50

Carlos (real name, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez; most-used alias, Carlos Martinez) is the terrorist whose identity was suddenly disclosed to the world in 1975 when he evaded arrest in a Paris flat, killing two policemen and his own closest comrade. His ruthlessness, his responsibility for a series of headline-catching attacks before and since the *drame de la rue Toullier*, his pose as a playboy, his string of naïvely admiring girls – all these make him a natural for publicity, which in a curious way is the aim of terrorism. The 'Carlos complex' is the name given by these authors, *Sunday Telegraph* journalists who have specialised in the subject, to denote his connections. These include certain old-style Communists, possibly the KGB, radical extremists from Germany and Japan, the Palestinian hijack enthusiasts, Gaddafi and Amin.

The authors have done a great deal of work in pulling together what is known about contemporary terrorism, as well as being the first to get at certain facts. I estimate that their account is about 90 per cent reliable. When they deal with events that occurred before they started working on the story they sometimes go wrong; thus, Castro was not responsible for hijackings to Cuba in the Sixties, which were carried out by ordinary criminals desirous of reaching a country that had no relations with the US. Had Castro been the planner, the aircraft and passengers would not have been promptly returned, as they were. Also, Dobson and Payne have a pardonable tendency to create secrets where none exist: thus, it isn't a 'surprising revelation' that the German magazine *Konkret* was financed from the GDR. I remember someone on the German Left mentioning this to me, as common knowledge, in 1962.

But this book's main flaw is its theory that terrorism was the natural outcome of the radicalism of the later Sixties, as manifested in the Paris events of May 1968, the admiration for Che Guevara, and the campaigns against the American side in Vietnam. In their keynote-striking introduction, Dobson and Payne say flatly: 'The real catalyst which turned young idealists into terrorists was Vietnam.' Here we have a classic case of the logical fallacy known as assuming the converse. The militant Left formed a recruiting-ground for the terrorists; even this statement should be heavily qualified because many terrorists, notably Arabs, had never been on the Left in any accurate sense. But to show a political identification one would need to adduce, for instance, a Trafalgar Square demonstration in support of terrorism, akin to the demonstrations in support of Ho Chi Minh. The number of 'young idealists' who became terrorists was roughly comparable with the number of Communists who, at an early period, became Soviet spies. It was never natural for an ordinary Communist to want to be a spy, as Len Deighton for one could see. Similarly, when Ulrike Meinhof – to take the obvious case – became a terrorist she ceased to be a representative of the Left, as she probably realised before she died.

The error is the more striking because Dobson and Payne do, at one point, draw a clear distinction between terrorism and guerrilla war (which in our times includes the revolutionary war and the war of national liberation). The remarkable fact about the Palestinian terrorists – described as guerrillas by the BBC, to the understandable annoyance of the Israelis – is that they have never attempted guerrilla war, and never once attacked the Israeli army of occupation. It wouldn't have been impossible, since they have secure bases, plenty of arms and money, and plenty of potential manpower in the refugee camps. One difference between terrorism and revolutionary war, indeed, is the selection of neutrals instead of enemies as targets. The futility of all this hijacking and random shooting at air terminals is more obvious to people on the Left, in my experience, than to the average newspaper-reader. The most that has ever been achieved by even a successful hijacking is the release from prison of those guilty of the previous hijacking, which merely puts the terrorists back to square one and brings no progress toward their objectives. The only argument for it is that it brings publicity to 'the cause', but publicity and support are by no means the same thing. Herostratus, after all, made himself famous by burning down a temple. Lenin was wise to this and used to allude to an opponent as 'the famous (fame of Herostratus!)' So-and-so.

In one of their good phrases, Dobson and Payne describe terrorism as 'the strategy of the weak'. And, in so far as there really is a connection between the Left and terrorism, it is this: the resort to terrorism is a symptom of desperation at a time when genuine revolutionary action appears to be fatally stalled. The current outburst bears an interesting resemblance to the wave of bomb-throwings and assassinations in the 1890s, a reaction to the mood of hope deferred that overcame the socialist movement after the crushing of the Paris Commune. The relationship between political achievement and terrorism is the same as the relationship between sexual success and rape. Beyond the act itself, nothing is gained; and, in the intervals of solitary brooding, that must be bleakly clear.

Among this week's contributors:

No Home but the Struggle, the conclusion of EDWARD UPWARD's trilogy, will be published by Heinemann in June.

ADRIAN LYTTELTON's *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy 1919-1929* was published in 1973.

DAVID MITCHELL is the author of *Women on the Warpath* (1966) and *The Fighting Pankhursts* (1967). His biography of Christabel Pankhurst is to be published by Macdonald & Jane's later this year.

Lotte H. Eisner
FRITZ LANG

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Eric Rhode, **New Statesman**

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Paul Theroux

Confidence Trick

My Oxford edited by ANN THWAITE *Robson* £4.75
My Cambridge edited by RONALD HAYMAN *Robson* £4.75

After ploughing through the testimonies of 24 Oxford and Cambridge graduates in these two collections I feel the urge – having had my ear well and truly bent – to speak up for myself and describe my own college days. But eight months at the University of Maine left me with no bright stories; and the next three years at a place that looked as if it was made out of Tupperware and poison-ivy were purgatorial and filled me with a loathing for university life. Still, in Uganda and Singapore, when my wife's surface-mail copy of *St Hilda's News* showed up I seized it and read it straight through, with genuine pleasure. But I remained convinced that Oxford and Cambridge graduates were people oddly magnetised to their past and shared a deficiency, something akin to ancestor-worship – indeed, it shows in many of these testimonies as unexpected reverences that have yet to be wrung out. My best friends today are people who share my loathing or else don't celebrate their academic careers, even in the backhanded way of what-a-little-devil-I-was.

There are kindred spirits here. I can identify with anyone who says (as several do) 'I have not been back since' or 'It still fills me with horror'. Piers Paul Read strikes the right note about Cambridge:

> its pretensions amount to fraud – a confidence-trick played on the nation and the world. I have never willingly gone back.

One looks in vain in these books for flunk-outs, wasters, jocks, system-buckers. All are successful graduates cursed with total recall, and the really interesting people are not the authors but the subjects of nostalgic anecdotes. Thom Gunn's reminiscence of our own John Coleman is typical:

> Some time after I first knew him he was walking one evening with a girl on a Cambridge street, neither of them in the black gowns students were then supposed to wear after dark. Proctors appeared to question them; they answered with assumed voices and farcical accents, for which they were sent down from Cambridge.

One longs for Coleman's side of the story, particularly because *My Cambridge* is by far the duller of the two collections. M. C. Bradbrook's contribution, the best, is a history of her Cambridge over the past 50 years, Eleanor Bron's contains a good analysis of the differences between Cambridge and Oxford; Donald Davie is wise to the cultural – as opposed to the class – divide; but Arianna Stassinopoulos reads like an *Any Questions?* ('Mrs Florence Stringburn. What do the panel remember of their university days?') reply which one finds oneself retranslating into Stassinopoulese: *I steel een farct get dat aygstra tweenkle* etc. 'Cambridge, whatever else, was a great melting pot,' says Ms Bron, and the evidence is as near as John Vaizey's piece, which might have been subtitled 'Up from Lewisham': 'It was not till my first term at Cambridge,' he writes, 'that I spoke to my first Jew and met my first black man.' Read his statement again and examine those verbs.

My Oxford makes the place sound raffish and entertaining – more mentions of clothes, food, drink and sex. Boothby goes golfing (I did quite a lot of golfing at the University of Maine – is this interesting?), Raymond Massey goes clubbing and both remember 'Sligger' Urquhart with affection. Angus Wilson's piece – as good as any of his short stories – is a merciless remembrance of timid pretensions and amateur theatricals; Antonia Fraser's (which begins, 'I see it all in terms of clothes') is a lively little number with an implied moral: Blondes Have More Fun. Nigel Nicolson's is one of the few negative voices, while Nina Bawden is alone in actually saying that she's forgotten the names of many of her tutors. Good for her! These pieces are full of names to which one can't easily attach faces, reputations or achievements, and it is quite clear that under the sponsorship of Robson Books many of the authors pounced on the opportunity to repay debts: I'll never forget old So-and-so, I owe a great deal to old Such-and-such. I speak strictly as an outsider; so much in British life seems to be private reference, unsharable experience. It was the feeling I had when I read *St Hilda's News*, which I found jolly. But I know better now.

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Basil Davidson

Fair and Fine?

A History of Zambia by ANDREW ROBERTS *Heinemann* £7.00 and £2.90

'Fair and fine, fair and fine: 50 farms and a railway line', was the old mock-rueful quip applied by its white settlers to the land they called Southern Rhodesia, and it could apply just as well to its neighbour, Northern Rhodesia, save that the 'fair and fine' in Northern Rhodesia was lessened for a long time by malarial infestation. In neither were you likely to hear anything said by whites about blacks (unless the blacks were servants), for the blacks, when seen from bar and club and bougainvillea'd veranda, simply weren't on the scene. They were there as labour, of course, but in all other senses proper to be spoken of they were also 'not there'. Save for one or two works of social anthropology, there were no serious books about the blacks, while any stray visitor who cared to suggest that the local inhabitants had a history of their own was likely to be regarded as an agent of Moscow.

Andrew Robert's generally excellent book is a very convincing illustration of the extent to which this 'white-man's country' attitude has disappeared. Though happily making no concessions to the sloth of mind denoted rather often by the term 'popular writing', Roberts's well written work can be recommended even to readers who need only a small part of its capacious fund of information. They can skip the geology and archaeology if they wish, although these too, *mirabile dictu*, are made easily readable; but with a little perseverance they will find themselves launched into a fascinating account of social growth and development over many remote centuries.

For this book is especially good in that it sees history not only as a process, which might be little merit, but as one unfolding within its own specific reality and according to its own ecological and societal possibilities. This makes it possible for Roberts to explain these elusive societies from within the nature, as it were, of their own structures. Gone is the Euro-centric view of this or that people 'arriving' or 'departing' as a herd or horde; and in its place we have a meaningful description of cultural osmosis, technological change, political imbrication. What Roberts is writing here, in other words, is in no sense a rehash of more or less known facts and accepted views, but a rounded story that is obviously the fruit of long meditation and a great deal of hard work on the spot.

Packed with useful insights, these 'pre-colonial' chapters are followed by an equally scrupulous investigation of the colonial decades, which numbered about seven. Here Roberts is particularly good on the restrictive nature of the 'copper economy'. Yielding huge profits to the mining companies through most of 30 years, as well as fat royalties to the shareholders of the con-

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cession-holding British South Africa Company, copper mining also brought the 'home government' in Britain a very handy annual sum in income tax. Astonishingly little tax was retained in Northern Rhodesia, so that by 1964, when the country became independent as Zambia, 'colonial poverty' had managed to afford only one school capable of carrying Africans to the school-certificate level.

The ten-year Central African Federation is then well described, but the last chapters, writing of Zambian independence, are intellectually thin and superficial. One has the impression here that Roberts was writing *à contre coeur* in a field which has failed to attract his analytical faculties. Compared with the depth of thought displayed in earlier chapters, we are given little more than a muddle of reportorial description. We are told, for instance, that Zambia's political balance remains 'precariously based' because the economy is still dominated by copper, 'which aggravates the divisions between rich and poor'. But other remarks make it perfectly clear that the damage is done not by the domination of copper mining, but by the economic and political structures within which the copper is got.

President Kaunda is much praised as the kingpin of Zambia's political welfare. But then we are made to understand, a little further on, that Kaunda's policies are bound to lead to social conflict. Of grappling with the underlying issues in this Zambian model of a nation-state there is practically none. No doubt it is not that Roberts is out of his depth in these chapters, but rather that he has preferred not to dive in.

Susannah Clapp

Other People

A Situation in New Delhi by NAYANTARA SAHGAL *London Magazine Editions* £4.50
The Girl in the Picture by DIANA MELLY *Duckworth* £3.25
Scawsby by JOHN DRABBLE *Weidenfeld* £4.50
Bear by MARIAN ENGEL *Routledge* £3.50

Nayantara Sahgal is Jawaharlal Nehru's niece; *A Situation in New Delhi* is about the confusion and corruption which follow the death of an almost perfect Indian leader. Lootings and bombings by students and Untouchables, and populist wafflings from the new Cabinet, are observed with concern by a group of intellectuals from the old regime: the dead leader's limpid-eyed sister, her sturdy English lover and a shrewd Muslim teacher. Sipping their fruit-juices on terraces, they have much to say about the need for principle and moderation, and about the irresponsibility of others. They are rather less forthcoming about exactly what they themselves are proposing – though at the end of the novel their new political movement is sweeping the country.

Given the obvious appeal of her subject, and Miss Sahgal's own stake in the matter, it is a pity that her novel, which buzzes with interesting possibilities and discussions, should be overlaid with large helpings of rhetoric: about 'the poetry, the majesty of the rains', about 'the purest coinage' of honourable friendship, and about sex which is 'both simple and epic'. These statements come from the intellectuals we are apparently intended to applaud, but, couched in such terms, their high-mindedness comes to seem almost as unhelpful as the vague shiftiness they are engaged in eradicating.

The most telling, and best-told, scenes feature more minor, less elevated characters: a girl student, dazed by rape and the resulting ignominy' is driven to self-immolation: a plumply placid bride-to-be tries on her saris as she waits for her arranged marriage; a chauffeur presents an 'epistle' pleading for the advancement of his son, 'this no-good worthless'. A variety of attitudes are pinpointed vigorously and economically, and there is some tactful elucidation of different views, but *A Situation in New Delhi*, admirably ambitious in scope, would have been stronger if its author had not been tempted into annotating her good observations with idolatry.

The most surprising feature of Diana Melly's first novel is its lack of wheedling. It is something of an achievement to write unwailingly about a woman whose life goes from nuns to ECT; it is a considerable coup to be strikingly uningratiating when your first-person narrator spends her time 'being what other people want'.

The heroine of *The Girl in the Picture* is blessed with a pretty face, a mother who's convinced that she's going to be famous, and a blank attentiveness to the scenery of other people's lives. Stella doesn't so much progress as lope unpredictably into varied existences, savouring their possibilities, briefly gathering her own reactions, and then moving on: 'I stood on the bridge near the station and thought about suicide for long enough to make myself cry and then went and bought a ticket to London.' In the course of the novel she is a 'forward' 11-year-old who engages in 'enjoyable and revealing' chats with her father's mistress; a showgirl who wears a lot of purple and has gold dust in her hair; the fiancée of an upper-class disdainer who teaches her to say 'scent' instead of 'perfume'; a 16-year-old battered wife; a mother who poses for *Vogue* with her baby in a duffle-bag.

The Girl in the Picture might have been crisper with fewer episodes, but its tone of dogged unamazedness could not be bettered. Combining minimal expectations (sex proves to be 'disappointing rather than painful') with aspirations which lurch from the wish to be genteel (with a monkey-puzzle tree and matching make-up) to the wish to shock, Stella is too much of a slouch to be merely a plucky victim. Unstudied idiosyncracy is unusual; so, unfortunately, are heroines who are less interested in themselves than in what happens to them. Both are welcome.

Edward Robson, the hero of John Drabble's novel, is a solicitor with a ready capacity for pity, a quick sense of 'the numinous' and an apparent inability to escape people who are enraged by mixed marriages and illegitimacy. Representatives of these conditions proliferate in *Scawsby*: Edward has a half-Indian wife whose parents are unknown; he defends a black illegitimate youth who has fathered an illegitimate child; it finally turns out that his own parentage is not as respectable as he thought. Sympathetic attitudes are adopted by the narrator throughout, and space is made for some alarming information about the 'evil, lowering atmosphere' of certain courts, and for some disturbingly hectic plotting: in the last 60 pages, Edward's wife gives birth and chokes to death, and a cursory scramble on the back seat of a car leads to Edward marrying an unengaging but propertied admirer.

'Like his gifted daughter Margaret,' flutes the blurb, 'Judge Drabble is a critical but compassionate observer of ordinary life'. The judicial qualities of *Scawsby's* author are much on display in his kindly, sermonic novel; as is frequently the case when compassion makes an appearance, 'ordinary life' is less apparent than social issues.

Drastic remedies for city-dwelling spinsters are proposed in Marian Engel's *Bear*, in which a jaded librarian finds herself on a remote Canadian island with a houseful of books, visitors consisting of a whisky-swilling yokel and a toothless Red Indian, and a resident pet bear. The heroine takes it all calmly: she deals deftly with first editions, the mechanics of gas lamps and graniteware and finally allows the bear access not only to her cornflakes but also to her body. Their love-making (for love it is) is prolonged and successful, and leaves the librarian feeling 'clean and simple and proud'. Considerable effort is expended in trying to make bears an attractive proposition: points in their favour are, apparently, 'big, furry, asymmetrical balls' and 'a scent of musk as shrill as the high, sweet note of a shepherd's flute'. But, despite some persuasively restrained writing about the effects of solitariness, it is not easy to have faith in the regenerative faculties of 'the claw that had healed guilt'.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Benedict Nightingale

Embalmers' Arts

Julius Caesar *Olivier*
Stevie *Vaudeville*
Gimme Shelter *Royal Court*

The daggers plunged into people's backs in Parliament last week were, so far as I know, merely emblematic, and nothing so substantial as an empire was in danger of changing ownership. Yet it was clear that there was much more bustle and excitement within those sober walls than on the same night at the National Theatre, where civilisation itself was supposedly on the rack. *Julius Caesar* is, of course, only a play, written by a gentleman who has been jammed beneath the stones of Stratford church for 360 years; and it would, no doubt, be too much to expect those glumly posed, flatly intoning actors to mimic the wild, abandoned agony of a Tory backbencher at the moment of realising his leader's plot had failed, or even the frantic self-searchings of a Liberal in the process of deciding whether or not to conserve the podgy tyrant, Callaghan. But they might have tried to sound as if they meant just a little of what they were saying. As it was, the conspirators might have been a group of Strict and Particular Baptists gathered in private conclave to determine the future of a leader who was becoming too strict and particular altogether. Even the suggestion that the greybeard Cicero should be recruited, so that 'our youth and wildness shall no whit appear', is put forward by a gentleman of perhaps 50, one who certainly looks as unyouthful and unwild as any of his co-plotters, with their black hats and capes, statuesque stance and sombre demeanour.

True, John Schlesinger has his ideas about the play, as which director of Shakespeare has not nowadays. For instance, Artemidorus composes his conspiracy-busting letter to Caesar with the help of Popilius Lena, the senator who then tells Ronald Pickup's Cassius he hopes his 'enterprise may thrive': a man, you see, who likes to keep in with both sides. Again, John Gielgud's Caesar recites his Jack-Sprat stuff about the merits of fat flesh directly to Mr Pickup, who stands there looking vaguely uncomfortable. But the first innovation seems paltry and the second inept, and, in any case, neither they, nor the back projections, nor the clangorous off-stage band, nor the chronologically and topologically indeterminate cottons and linens, nor all the pricey palaver of production at the Olivier can provide the commodity most wanted, namely life. That's the job of the actors, and too many of them have been pumped brimful with embalming fluid.

Brian Cox's doleful, impassive Brutus looks as if he's been carved on Mount Rushmore, and tends to act like it too; and Mr Pickup's Cassius, though less merely mineral, gives little impression of having an individual character, let alone one driven by the personal spleen his speeches ascribe to him. Even Gielgud isn't the stimulant one had hoped, since his willowy Caesar lacks strength, power, ambition, and so fails to explain why he must be slaughtered. But at least he knows how to articulate Shakespeare's lines, which most of those around him don't, however supreme the eloquence they purportedly possess. Mark McManus's Antony, for instance, has a declamatory rasp that sandpapers the ear at roughly the same rate of revs whether he's supposed to be inflaming a public meeting or privately addressing a dead friend. Any halfway sensitive schoolboy would know that his speech to Caesar's body – 'Pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth/That I am meek and gentle with these butchers' – should be intimately delivered, perhaps even whispered, and that there should be a pause before the last word, which should itself be injected with distaste, perhaps even horror. But Mr McManus drones noisily and indiscriminately on, failing to give the butchers even the emphasis one would expect of a public health inspector investigating a complaint about pork chops. Oh, why spell out the monotony further? This is, quite simply, a grisly deed perpetrated on a fresh and thrilling play. Shakespeare's bones have rarely seemed deader.

Stevie Smith's corpse and corpus fare better, thanks to the necromantic wiles of Glenda Jackson, not (admittedly) the likeliest candidate for the part, however well provided with dowdy shifts, beige stockings and lank hair to flap about the ears. She is never strident, as one had feared she might be, but invariably astringent, which is what her subject was on all matters except that of cats. An element of kindliness is perhaps missing, birth-strangled by her ironic caw and squawks of glee; but you can't ask for everything, especially when you already have more than so retiring a life promised. Miss Jackson delivers the poetry with tact and feeling, and steers us unerringly through 70 years of quiet memories, from the time 'I sat up in my baby carriage and wished mama hadn't made such a foolish marriage' to the last, dreadful dumbness inflicted by a brain-tumour. She gives us Smith the child-rebel, Smith the timid, touchy lover, Smith the 'Anglican agnostic', spikily insisting that 'if I'd been the Virgin Mary, I'd have said no'. Also, of course, Smith the almost ostentatiously unpretentious celebrity, closeted with her philistine aunt in Palmer's Green, wryly deriding suburbia from suburbia's drab epicentre, a doughty goblin among the plaster gnomes.

Hugh Whitemore's play doesn't pry very deeply. There is no attempt to explain why Stevie Smith once tried to kill herself. Perhaps she was less enraptured with loneliness than she liked to believe; perhaps she really did think of death as a friendly gentleman-caller whom it would be rude to resist. No one is saying. But what the script does pretty seamlessly is crochet together life and work, biography and poetry, so that it seems quite natural that 'Not Waving but Drowning', grittily spoken onstage, should end to a breezy cry of 'dinner's ready' from the wings. Indeed, it is often difficult to say which is which, though that is partly because of the casual rhythms, stray rhymes and chatty, confessional manner of the verse itself. The effect, I found, was to make the uneventful seem strangely eventful, or at least eventful enough to keep at bay the bug that threatened me at the National. With Miss Jackson at her most biting, with Mona Washbourne so observant and plausible as the slowly ageing 'lion aunt', and Peter Eyre as a series of harrassed followers, there was no way the sleeping sickness could strike.

I'm glad to join the fans of Barrie Keeffe's *Gimme Shelter*, two plays programmed to congeal into one in act three. First, we're presented with a rebellious clerk, wrathfully eying the gentlemen batsmen at his firm's annual cricket match; then, a spotty school-leaver, frothing bitterly at having spent five years learning nothing, holding hostage the headmaster who still doesn't know his name; and finally, some not-quite-predictable irony on the cricket boundary. The clerk, now an embryo manager, is confronted with the classroom terrorist, now a labourer eager only to forget the day he stood poised with a fag over a petrol tank: he acclaims the incredulous boy as a revolutionary hero, and continues adjusting his pads. Keeffe's idea is partly to speak up for the academic no-hoper, partly to question the honesty of soi-disant radicals who affect to care for them, and I'd say he achieves the first aim triumphantly, the second less so. Though he's strongly played by Phillip Joseph, the clerk's development seems planned, computed. That of his callow victim, a still stronger performance from Philip Davis, is not.

Television

Ian Hamilton

Ming-Pong

The World Table Tennis Championships (BBC-2) may well be the 'largest sporting event in Britain since the 1948 Olympic Games' but if you're not used to watching big time ping-pong the first thing that's likely to strike you is the way in which it almost mockingly insists upon the miniature. Practitioners of average build are made to seem lumpishly cramped as they tower above the lilliputian field of play, and indeed there are moments when part of the

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required discipline seems to be in pretending that you're smaller than you are. At any minute little Johnny may return and claim his bat back.

Which could explain why these championships' chief attraction has been the spectacle of flaxen hulks from Hungary and Scandinavia being repeatedly cut down to size by dwarfish little chaps from Asia. The East-West confrontation which the commentators have been foaming over throughout the week has had nothing at all to do with politics; it's been a straightforward contest between our size and theirs – and table-tennis, it must now be clear, is just their size. There has been the isolated six-foot hero, but even his achievement has been called in question by the rumour that the Chinese have been told to throw a game or two in the interests of international goodwill. By and large, the large have been outclassed.

Being exactly the right height has given the Asians the confidence to perfect all kinds of arcane, humiliating tricks. As if to taunt his opponent's excess of inches, one Chinaman lofted the ball a good six feet in the air before serving it – the white man was still gaping at the rafters when the ball whistled past his left ear. Others employed secretly designed two-sided bats – one plain, one pimply – and invisibly switched surfaces from time to time so that the foe would never know for sure what kind of spin would send him reeling this time. As carve-up followed carve-up, the Chinese team sat on its bench, utterly expressionless – each of them quietly waiting for his turn to win. Sooner or later someone's bound to say it: why can't they pick on fellows their own size?

Did families in 1951 really get up from their Christmas lunch and gather round the piano for a few choruses of 'The Holly and the Ivy'? According to Ray Connolly in *Almost Tomorrow*, the first play of BBC-1's *Jubilee* series, this was the routine procedure, and I'm disposed to take his word for it. Everything else in his nostalgic essay was so lovingly true to the period that we could well have been watching a film *made* in 1951 – with all the surface-deep characterisation, the soppy-polite dialogue, the to-be-seen-a-mile-off twists of plot that made skipping school in those days less of a pleasure than it should have been. Shortly after the Christmas jam-session, Daddy cops a coronary (a protracted funeral scene reminded us that in 1951 they used to bury people in graveyards, mourners wore black and sometimes cried) and thus leaves the family firm untended. This places his eldest daughter in a spot. Fully 33, she is on the brink of her last chance of marriage – to a clean-limbed pillar of the colonial service, all chin and duffle-coat and of such rectitude that he has not after six years seen fit to tamper with her honour. He's off to Kenya, where the Mau Mau are hotting up ('Nothing to worry about. I can't see Churchill standing for any of that nonsense') and she's faced with choosing between tea-parties in the bush and staying behind to keep her heritage intact. The conflict is briskly resolved; she bites her lower lip and he, a trifle piqued, denounces her as 'a silly old thing'. The radio announces the death of George VI, and the lovers separate into their chosen slots in the new era that's beginning: he sets off for a showdown with Kenyatta ('a bully and a brute') and she determines to instal some up-to-date machinery. A kind of domesticated *All Our Yesterdays*, this was an undistinguished drama – but I rather fear that the series is going to be hard not to wallow in from time to time.

There was a nasty moment on ITV on Sunday night, and it ought to be explained. A newsflash during the evening had told us that there had been a ghastly air crash in Tenerife, and that we'd hear more later. At News time it crossed my mind that in the circumstances they would maybe drop the prefatory ads or shove them at the end or in the middle of the bulletin. They didn't – well, life must go on. What didn't cross my mind was that one of the ads (for a new brand of soft drink) would contain the following ribald exchange, delivered with much cackling mirth: 'What do you call a flying elephant?' 'Ho-hoho – A *Jumbo Jet* of course!' Seconds later, the grave face of Gordon Honeycombe telling us how many hundreds had just died. Doesn't *anyone* check these things; and if not, why not?

Art

John Spurling

Image Men

Light Fantastic *Royal Academy*
Earth Mysteries *Acme Gallery, 43 Shelton Street, London*

Away with Michelangelo and Rothko! HOLOCO and RILKO are the names your art critic must grapple with now. Three dimensional photographs at the Royal Academy and a rediscovery of 'Earth Mysteries' at the Acme Gallery: these are stirring times. HOLOCO is a group of three, a physicist, a specialist in laser technology and a film art director, who have co-operated to develop the new technique of holography. The theory of holography – the reproduction of objects in three dimensions by the use of a photographic plate – was discovered in 1947 by Dennis Gabor, but the invention did not become practicable at once. It required first the further invention of the laser in the Sixties to provide a strong enough light and then, only during the past year, the perfecting of a suitably high quality emulsion for coating the plates. A hologram is made by splitting the laser beam into two and the three-dimensional image can then be reproduced either so as to be viewed through the plate, as through a pane of glass, or by a more complicated process so as to appear solid but intangible in front of the plate. All this and much more is lucidly explained in the book that accompanies the exhibition (Bergström & Boyle Books £1.50), but you may just as well treat holography as magic since by this means Mephistopheles might easily conjure you up, if not the semblance of Helen of Troy, then at least that of Elizabeth Taylor in all her full colour and contour.

But perhaps not quite so easily yet. The invention is in its infancy: colour reproduction is still unperfected, size is a problem and 'to project in space a life-size hologram of a human being would require optics as yet only considered by astronomical observatories'. So we must be content for the moment with monochrome teacups and telephones, a small model of Concorde and a sculptured figure to which the laser beam imparts a black speckled effect which would be tiresome if one wished to study the piece closely. Just the magic itself, in other words, and the promise of greater magic to come are the main points of this show and since there is a long queue outside and such a press inside that it is hard to do more than glimpse the illusory exhibits, you might prefer simply to contemplate your own telephone and imagine passing your hand through it.

RILKO stands for 'Research Into Lost Knowledge Organisation'. Founded by two women who 'decided to work together for the preservation of the Somerset Zodiac', it now embraces geomancers, dowsers, ley hunters, surveyors of stone circles, mystics, artists and all those who believe that the patterns of 'traditional knowledge' known to our remote ancestors and traced by them from prehistoric times on the landscape can still be discerned. Standing stones giving out currents which cause dowsers to fall backwards or sideways; stone circles laid out on strict geometrical principles with 'foresights' for precise astronomical readings of the stations of the moon's orbit; 'water-lines' which pass under barrows and the altars of pre-Reformation churches; 'old straight tracks' or 'leys' which join up 'all the old shrines and landmarks of the countryside'; such is some of the evidence. You may treat this as magic too, if you wish, or you may try to answer such pertinent questions as: 'How is it that megalithic people were constructing subtle geometric forms apparently using "Pythagorean" right-angled triangles of whole numbers at least a millennium before Pythagoras lived?'

RILKO's exhibition, like HOLOCO's, is more interesting conceptually than visually. Most of the artists assembled under its banner are depressingly uninspired by these ancient mysteries. There are three pleasant marble fonts or bird-baths by Colin Figue, but the shining exception to the generally low level of execution is David Morris's *Batch Twt*. Pushing through two sets of black curtains you find yourself in a small square room whose floor is almost entirely covered with stalks of pale coloured light, 25 circular clusters grouped in diagonal bands of five colours, red, orange, yellow, green and blue-violet. That is if you arrive at the climax of the cycle, when all the transparent rods are illuminated; otherwise you may find only one or two bands visible with large black areas between, which as you wait will suddenly become pricked with light. The strict formality and regularity of Morris's arrangement (based on the magic square of five and the flat-topped shapes of Herefordshire barrows) and the fact that he uses, as he says, 'plastics and electronics . . . the two perhaps most abused products of 20th-century technology' are essential ingredients to the magical effect of these phos-

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phorescent apparitions. The piece may be enjoyed simply as a kinetic abstract, but in the context in which it is shown one's mind turns to leys, stone circles, water-lines and constellations. Flann O'Brien describes an equally exactly made object with similar properties in *The Third Policeman*: 'It was so faultless and delightful that it reminded me forcibly, strange and foolish as it may seem, of something I did not understand and had never even heard of.'

Films

John Coleman

Beamish

Jabberwocky *Columbia*
Joseph Andrews *London Pavilion*

Jabberwocky is written by two expatriate Americans, Terry Gilliam and Charles Alverson, and directed by the former, yet it could hardly be more British. Casting to the winds my native bashfulness, I note that my review of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* – also directed by Mr Gilliam – closed on the words, 'our humour leans more readily into the non-sequitur, the Lewis Carroll'. Be that as it may, this latest lunacy engaging the odd, not to say utterly cracked refugee from the original *Flying Circus* team indeed has its tiny genesis in that Looking-glass poem: there is a monster, held back till near the end but then more than passably Tenniel, and there is an arch beamish boy in the gosh-smiley person of Michael Palin as Dennis, a medieval cooper's son. Barrels are not his style, unless one counts the capacious Griselda Fish-finger, the tun of lard he reluctantly abandons for fame and fortune in the city. As a cherished token, he bears with him a rejected potato with a Griseldan bite out of it. When, after scatty adventures and some cheating, he beheads the Jabberwock and wins the dim-witted Princess's hand, it is not what he wanted at all. But then this was never a fairy-tale: more an exceedingly and hilariously tall one. Its excuse for a story is that the monster is useful to a handful of profiteering merchants, since the peasants are fearfully forced into the city, where they are rooked rotten; old King Bruno (Max Wall without his teeth) is wearily encouraged by his Chamberlain (John LeMesurier) to find a champion to dispose of the beast; eager young Dennis, catalyst for disaster, stumbles about, reaching his high point in the wholesale wrecking of an armourer's shop.

Mr Gilliam and his photographer, Terry Bedford, who brings back some ravishing images withal, hardly flinch from showing those bad old middle ages as unwashed, uncomely and un-toilet-trained. This emphasis on dung and dinginess somehow helps the funnies to be funnier. At the simplest level, there are gags like the presence of dark-brown molars – 'Turned snow-white overnight,' murmurs someone – and the discussion as to whether it is 11th- or 12th-century ceiling that the King has just found in his food. There is probably too much pissing from battlements and there is certainly too much about a mad band of religious flagellants. Against this, there is the marvellous market hubbub, with three merchants, each borne through a narrow street by four oafs in a kind of mini-Grand Prix; a master-cooper reduced to begging and contentedly squatting with one of his feet self-amputated before him (later, both); a solitary crier ringing his bell and shouting 'Rush hour!', to be lost in a stampede.

John Bird has a great bit as an over-officious court herald, somewhere between Leonard Sachs of *The Good Old Days* and a ringside MC; Harry H. Corbett has a boring scene or two as a randy, blustering squire, redeemed when an old gag is given a sick new twist: the bed under which he is hiding collapses beneath the masterful bulk of Bernard Bresslaw and errant spouse – a pool of blood slowly seeps into view. In the zaniest sequence of all, Princess, King and Chamberlain watching a tourney, blood once more comes into its own: the trio are finally spattered from head to toe. With that peculiar private agony of his, gentle LeMesurier suggests some milder form of winnowing out a winner. Mr Wall's crumpled, nasal scorn, all posh with carefully missed aitches, is to see and hear: '*Hide* and seek?', he suggests witheringly and, by Gilliam, we next get precisely that, knights shyly counting to 20 and nipping about all over the set. The film has a lot of fat on it throughout: mercifully, it has a lot of meaty laughs as well.

Tony Richardson's *Joseph Andrews* is, as he has said in interview, not another *Tom Jones*. *Tom Jones*, heaven help us, was better. Fielding's skit on Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* has become T. Richardson's farce on Fielding. Peter Firth winsomely goes through undemanding motions as young Joseph, the virginal servant and everywoman's prey. The movie succeeds in being both fast and heavy, thanks to the quickfire kind of cutting that intimates insecurity about the worth of individual scenes. Beryl Reid has one of the few grateful roles as Mrs Slipslop, surely – on this hearing – the model for Mrs Malaprop. 'He'll not go to the giblet!' she cries, her mammaries aheave, and much more of the same. She is maid to Lady Booby (Ann-Margret), soon happily widowed and also hot after Joseph. A deal of plot is dealt with via unwieldy flashbacks, Jim Dale looks splendidly swarthy as a gipsyish pedlar who keeps cropping up to sort things out, Michael Hordern can do no wrong and therefore saves most of the footage in which he appears as Parson Adams. Ann-Margret? You could say she carries all before her.

Interestingly, there are similarities with *Jabberwocky*. Intermittent care has been taken to give a period look to the mollocking revels, though what period is for the experts to wrangle over. Lady Booby's make-up, for instance, for some of the time at least has the right poisoned-chemical tartiness and quite a few of the cast seem smelly. Yet much of the photography (by David Watkin), when it isn't being technically messed about by speeded-motion or encouraged to go all commercial-lyrical among fields of bobbing red poppies, is handsome and nicely composed. The screenplay by Allan Scott and Chris Bryant relies preponderantly on innuendo that is like having a stick poked in the eye, when it fails to settle for the more straightforward, ribtickling bawdry of 'Bollocks!' and Lady B's aghast, near-final lines: 'What fucking next?' What, indeed? The most perplexing influence on the whole silly undertaking would appear to be that of the late Pasolini. Stripped and left for dead, Mr Firth lies by the roadside, bottoms up, damn near caressed by the camera; some of the rustic antics revive none-too-merry memories of the tiresome caperings of such as Franco Citti and Ninetto Davoli; the saccharine treatment of the bucolic love between Joseph and his Fanny (sweet-faced Natalie Ogle) is clearly striving for the authentic and sexy innocence Pasolini here and there hit on in his *Decameron*.

Opera

John Morgan

Stratospheric

Werther *Coliseum further performances April 1, 6 and 9*

Great tenors are hard to find, so that the real chance that we have a new one in Britain will have all fanatics, and we are a desperate crowd, raising heads to scent the prey. Nature, which has much else to answer for, made, according to the scholar Scholes, too many baritones and mezzo-sopranos. This year is the 40th anniversary of that melancholy occasion when the Sheffield Festival had to be abandoned because of a shortage of tenors. And so, taking some side-bets, and feeling much of that diffidence which must have troubled Archimedes before he summoned up enough courage to stop whispering 'Eureka' and to shout it out loud, I suggest that John Brecknock, the Werther of this fine ENO production, will soon be in that stratosphere where angels sing: that is, abroad.

The country is not short of tenors as it was 40 years ago. Kenneth Collins, Ryland Davies, Robert Tear and many others are more than that. But not since Stuart Burrows has there been one who can command any stage in the world. Mozart tenors of that quality more precisely exemplify the strict application of the law of supply and demand in the last open market place outside a souk, but the law applies in the looser, more romantic stalls. Before Mr Burrows came Jon Vickers who, in this context, counts as British. How odd, then, when I suggested to a composer-friend that John Brecknock, overnight, had grown into being a tenor of the highest order, he replied that he still had 'the rough edges of the young Vickers'. Not being a scholar, I

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would put it that he had the strengths.

Mr Brecknock is a good actor – indeed in this production he and his comrades raised the heretical question of whether Janet Baker, for all her wonderful singing, was not miscast as the romantic lead, Charlotte. His musicality is beyond dispute and Massenet's music is a tenor's dream of home. Given all that, what marks him out, as I'm sure the petulant Dr Scholes would have it, are gifts of nature. He has a loud voice. Great tenors need loud voices, which must be infuriating to singers quite as skilled, but lacking the right nodule or lung-size. He also has that talent, usually derided as being Viennese, and for which there are many technical descriptions, of being able to croon when it matters. It is something Tauber made a trick of; Björling couldn't help it and neither could Gigli. Some regard it as vulgar; Wunderlich somehow managed it even singing Mozart. At its best it represents a command over score, words, voice and (which also matters) audience. It is also what people pay to hear. Next he sings Rossini with the Welsh National Opera. We shall see: but, believe me, there are fans who follow tenors as if they were racehorses.

This is one of the best of recent ENO productions. Charles Mackerras and the orchestra are almost as one; Stefanos Lazaradis's sets make the tale credible, which is quite an achievement. Harold Blackburn, Patrick Wheatley and Joy Roberts act as well as they sing. (Why Miss Roberts doesn't sing more often is mystifying). And so it is sad to report that in so coherent a performance Dame Janet seems something of a *prima donna*. Of course, she is; she sings like one: it is just that when one is beguiled by a tale, music and performance, when someone is being a great singer it can disturb the balance. This will not be true for those who have gone along just to hear and see a *prima donna*.

Music

Andrew Clements

Northern Lights

Camden Festival

Of all London's music festivals, Camden seems the most provincial. Lacking the grandeur of setting of the City of London Festival and the monolithic efficiency of the Proms, it still manages, like Bath or Cheltenham, to convey a strong sense of place, scattering its events over the borough from Highgate to St Pancras. Never a festival to lay much store by thematic planning, it prefers to spin a bundle of short unconnected threads. There is choral music, song, lunchtime chamber music, 20th-century music and opera (Kent Opera's visiting production of *Orfeo* was reviewed last week); as well as more substantial weeks of jazz (which Charles Fox will write about next week) and contemporary dance, discussed alongside by Oleg Kerensky.

This year, in collaboration with the Park Lane Group, the contemporary element was devoted to student performances: the modern-music ensembles of the Royal Academy, Guildhall School and Royal College were each given one concert. Such encouragement was timely, for in the last few years the London colleges have woken up to at least the mainstream of contemporary music. The RCM has put on first-class performances of very demanding works by Messiaen, Stockhausen, Boulez and Berio, the RAM's Manson Ensemble gave an evening of Penderecki, and last year played the complete works of Varèse. The Manson included Varèse's *Intégrales* in their Camden programme, an otherwise rather bitty assortment of Stravinsky, Webern, Patterson and Globokar, with only Berg's Chamber Concerto to provide much substance.

The Manson's regular conductor is John Carewe, but his sudden illness on the day of the concert put the direction in the hands of Michael Schönwandt, an Academy student, and Stephen Savage, conductor of the RCM's Twentieth-Century Ensemble. Perhaps this accounted for the rather black-and-white performances, enhanced by a hall (St Pancras Assembly Rooms) which robbed most sounds of their subtlety. Certainly Varèse's no-nonsense block construction was more suited to the Manson's gutsy approach than Webern's Four Songs Op.13, where much of the instrumental chiaroscuro was lost, although Karen Jensen's accurate singing was fragilely beautiful. Paul Patterson's *Floating Music* is an essay in delicate textures that is concerned with creating a transition-less music. Thematic fragments glide from instrument to instrument, rather like a radio being tuned between stations; the effect is inconclusive and the insertion of a conventionally built climax somewhat incongruous. The composer conducted, and was also responsible for the electronics in Globokar's *Discourse 3* for five oboes and microphones, a jokey exercise in sonorities and progressive asphyxiation.

If the audience for contemporary music at Camden is enthusiastic but small, attendances at other events seem to be no problem. By all accounts the opera performances were all sold out well in advance and certainly the rapturous full house which greeted Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's first recital made even her singing seem superfluous. Perhaps that's just as well, for not even her greatest fan would pretend that the voice is what it was. Nowadays Schwarzkopf doesn't attempt the more demanding song cycles, preferring to arrange her recitals in thematic blocks – a group of songs on 'Devotion', another on 'Recollections and Anticipations' – drawn from the whole repertoire. Each song is introduced with such charm that the audience is held entranced, quite willing to forgive the very frequent moments of strain. Geoffrey Parsons as always was the exceptional accompanist. The great lady is still Camden's greatest treasure.

In our Selected Spring and Summer Books List we regret that we omitted the name of Sidney Bloch, co-author with Peter Reddaway of Russia's Political Hospitals, *published by Gollancz.*

Ballet

Oleg Kerensky

No Performance

What is 'modern' or 'contemporary' dance? Even the labels are controversial. Martha Graham prefers 'contemporary'; Horst Koegler, in his admirably comprehensive new *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Ballet* (Oxford £4.95) gives only 'modern'. He defines it as 'a variety of contemporary theatrical dance styles, which are not based on (and originally emerged in strict opposition to) the classical-academic *danse d'école*'. Fair enough, but what happens when there is no dancing at all, when the 'dancers' do gym, or walk about, or talk? The practitioners themselves are dissatisfied with the way they are judged, and with the amount of public subsidy they receive. Jan Murray's article in last week's *Time Out* puts their case; they claim to be doing a performing art, not a performance art. If that means anything, it presumably means they are performing for themselves, not for the audience, which is what many of us have long suspected.

Many of the 'modern' choreographers have little dance training or experience, and often have confused intellectual ideas, as Ninette de Valois incisively points out in her fascinating anthology of articles, old and new (*Step by Step* W. H. Allen £4.50). Last week the Camden Festival produced terrifying fresh evidence at the Shaw Theatre where the Extemporary Dance Group staged an alleged murder story which was totally incomprehensible, several works in which repetitive and uninteresting movements bore little relation to the sounds, and one in which contempt for music was carried to its logical conclusion by switching part of Brahms's first piano concerto on and off at random. This was sheer genius, however, compared with the Sun Sum group, whose idea of jazz dancing was doing slow gymnastic and karate movements and statue poses. The public showed good sense in staying away from both groups; giving them any public money was a disgrace.

Yet modern dance can be entertaining and exciting. Even a simple walk-about to music, with skilful arm movements, *can* be charming and touching, as Fonteyn demonstrated on Sunday in the excellent 'Kids' Gala' at the Coliseum; her interpretation of a solo from Ashton's 37-year-old *The Wise Virgins* was an object-lesson. At an opposite extreme, Lindsay Kemp's flamboyantly camp *Salome*, recently at the Round House, successfully mixed mime, simple dance, speech and lighting effects to titillate and entertain. In New York recently Alwin Nikolais' *Guignol* used lighting and dance to achieve macabre sf effects, while his *Triad*, with its kaleidoscopic slides, was very spectacular.

The highlights of my New York visit, however, were provided by classical ballet. Peter Schaufuss, soon to be back with Festival Ballet at the Coliseum, was in electri-

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fying form, both with New York City Ballet and as a guest with Ballet Theatre, dancing a sensational Albrecht to Makarova's Giselle. Ballet Theatre's technically brilliant Japanese ballerina, Yoko Morishita, shone in the *Corsaire* and *Don Quixote* pas de deux at a gala, ably partnered by her husband, Tetsutaro Shimizu.

New York City Ballet's new *Bournonville Divertissements* is sheer delight. The *Flower Festival* pas de deux and four lesser-known numbers are danced with more authentic lightness, precision and command of style than our companies usually muster; Stanley Williams is obviously an outstanding Bournonville producer. NYCB is in fine form, with exciting new dancers – especially men – coming up in support of Suzanne Farrell, Kay Mazzo, Patricia McBride, Peter Martins and Helgi Tomasson.

Exhibition

David Mitchell

Gran's Army

Women at War 1914-1918 *Imperial War Museum until 30 October*

A visit to the Imperial War Museum tends to leave me with mixed feelings – a sneaking sympathy with the young anarcho-pacifist who, some years ago, tried to set fire to the place; and a powerful fascination with the collective memory so meticulously and voluminously assembled. No other museum comes near it in dense and poignant detail, especially of the Great War which was so widely expected to end War and let the People live happily ever after. Like the second world set-to this was, in Norman Mailer's phrase, a 'centrifuge of technology': but as the newly-opened special exhibition, *Women at War 1914-18,* abundantly proves, it was also an instrument of liberation and human happiness.

While men, nagged by patriotic posters, patriotic ladies, and recruiting duties, then caught by conscription, went to the slaughter area across the Channel, women closed the gaps in factories, on the land, in public transport and postal services, as chimney-sweeps and road-sweepers. They put on uniforms as police patrols or members of the Women's Legion, the WAAC, the WRNS and the WRAF. At times it looked like a fancy dress carnival: and indeed it was often a carnival of sheer exhilaration to set off against the dull carnage of the trenches and the barbed wire.

Accompanied by a paean of fatuous male wonderment, the ebullition was firmly controlled by a splendid array of 'natural leaders' – the Marchioness of Londonderry and Dames Katharine Furse, Rachel Crowdy, and Helen Gwynne Vaughan. Damehoods came as so many patronising pats on the back to women who, if they were feminists at all, were reassuringly disinclined to pursue the implications of the suffragette 'war' (Mrs Pankhurst did not get the job as Commandant of the WRAF for which she was short-listed). But quite as revealing as the proconsular portraits of the leaders and the photographs of fur coated FANY drivers looking rather like debutantes on a tremendous spree, are the propagandic but genuinely triumphant grins of sturdy working-class girls – tanners, fullers, brewery hands, fuselage dopers, shell-packers, coal-heavers: many of them among the half million refugees from domestic service for whom, also, the war, waving its democratic wand, made impossible dreams come true.

Neither TNT poisoning nor the risk of death (237 munitionettes died in explosions), nor snide press comments about their morals, lipstick and spending power, could dampen their delight. It comes through at the IWM in some evocative enlargements, a well-chosen sequence of slides, and a 12-minute treasure trove of a film, *Mrs John Bull Prepared,* complete with an aggressive, Fairy Godmotherish 'Spirit of Womanhood' in a long white robe. The knowledge that this infectious joy was due for a nasty jolt when the guns stopped firing – 'heroines' (now referred to as 'limpets') were required to stand down for returning 'heroes' and encouraged to get back to domestic service (re-christened 'Homecraft') – makes it all the more touching. These ticket-of-leave toilers are, for me, the real stars of the exhibition, together with a sprinkling of unashamedly freelance lady adventurers – the unstoppable Mrs St Clair Stobart, 'Gipsy' Knocker and the teenage Mairi Chisholm ('the Heroines of Pervyse'), Sergeant Flora Sandes: all of them radiate a sense of private fulfilment which had little or nothing to do with orthodox feminism.

By a prodigy of ingenious compression the story has been laid out in sequence from the suffrage campaign to the Khaki Election when Christabel Pankhurst and Mrs Pethick-Lawrence stood as parliamentary candidates. But for what is billed as a 'major Silver Jubilee Exhibition' this is disappointingly short of space and spectacle. Inevitably, the final impression is of clutter and claustrophobia. To a lesser degree, the same is true of Arthur Marwick's concomitant near-booklet of the same title (Croom Helm £6.95, Fontana £2.50). There are some useful statistics and choice items of off-beat information (e.g., an account of the Military Massage Corps). But some of his quotes from diaries in the IWM archives are excessively long; and surely his students could have warned him that the summary of the suffrage movement is riddled with errors (most of the dates are wrong. Christabel did not escape to Paris 'after being released under the Cat and Mouse Act in 1912' – it was not passed until a year after her flight). This is a valuable attempt to grapple with an important and enticing subject – which still awaits major treatment. In the meantime, Professor Marwick's sketch needs to be supplemented by, for instance, the late Ruth Adam's recent study, *A Woman's Place.* It remains to be seen whether the revolutionary excitement of the women's breakthrough is more fully conveyed in a six-part *Yesterday's Witness* series on BBC TV starting 25 April.

Weekend Competition

No 2457 **Set by Peter Alexander**

Some verses, please, on the policeman's right to strike (hippie, criminal and trade-union poetry would probably all go down well here). 12 lines by 15 April.

No 2454 **Set by Robin Chase**

Flies on the wall, peeping toms: we wanted extracts from the memoirs of Nixon's bed-bugs, Harold Wilson's tabbies, etc.

Report **by Fat Jeff**

A rather dozy week, quite frankly – the winners in tolerably sprightly form. Honourable mentions to Margaret Bradley and Roger Margison. £6 each to the winners. (I say, you're not going into one of your early-season hiatuses, are you? As I type, I see that The Lemon Kid is taking down next week's comp. folder. He is rolling up his sleeves.)

Once they had tea in the garden. My friend the March Hare told me to sit at table. Other rabbits would be there – Marcia, for instance. But I hid under the large table at which they were all crowded at one end to avoid Harold's pipe.

'Have a whine,' he said to Joe. 'Too hot!' said Joe. 'Then get out of the kitchen!' 'I'm not in it. Marcia does the cooking.' 'Only the books,' said she. Then grasping the teapot, added: 'Shall I do the honours?' With that she poured hot tea on Joe's head.

Harold emerged from his smoke screen and asked Mary to sing. So she sang.

Mary, Mary, quite contrary
How does your Harold grow?
The millionaires say he's theirs –
And I'm afraid they're right, you know.

P. W. R. Foot

I was just getting Nippy, Sucky and Bloaty ready to go out for dinner, when in came Mr Healey-Wealey. He sat on his bed with a great PLONK, and nearly squashed us! He was very angry with Mrs Healey-Wealey, who was in her bed. He said she was never, never again to talk about their house-keeping money, because everybody knew how rich they were, and it only reminded people. She said Mrs Thatcher talked about storing things, but he said SHE was SUPPOSED to be rich. Then he threw a red dispatch-box on the floor, and said they would never get next door, like this. He kept bouncing up and down, shouting about some bed bugger called Owen, though we've never heard of that name before, and about his lost budgie, or something. We had to wait HOURS before he settled down. Then we had a nice meal from his left ankle, and went back into the mattress.

W. S. Brownlie

I come now to that much criticised episode, my swimming away when Master fell in the sea. It was not cowardice or undogly panic, but a deliberate expression of dislike. Notwithstanding our famed intelligence and devotion, no canine intelligence could nose out any real, lasting persona in him to be faithful *to.* All different instant things to all people, his only reality was total unreality, utter posing. Imitating my Mistress, I composed a little verse aphorism; 'If to his own self true, it followed as day follows night he could not then be true to any man.' Or dog.

Adam Khan

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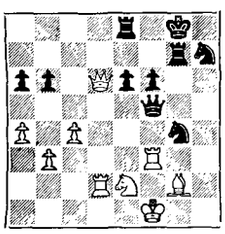
Tony Miles

Chess

No 27 **At Bad Lauterberg**

The world champion Anatoly Karpov duly took first place in the Bad Lauterberg tournament with an impressive score of 12/15. He was only in serious trouble once, against Csom when he (as white) adjourned in the diagrammed position. The vultures gathered expecting to see the champion's fourth defeat since gaining the title, but all did not go as anticipated. Csom sealed **1. . . . Q-N8ch** and after **2. R-Q1, Q-K5** the numerous threatened N forks forced Karpov to concede more material: **3. R-N3, N-K6ch; 4. K-N1, N x B; 5. R x Rch, K x R; 6. N-N3, Q-R1.** A strange move. After the more natural 6. . . .Q-B6 and if 7. Q-Q7ch, K-R3! 8. Q x R, Q x N the WK would quickly die of exposure. **7. Q-B7ch, K-R1; 8. R-Q7, N-B1??** Here 8. . . . N-N4 wins comfortably e.g. 9. N-R5, Q-K5; 10. N x P, Q-K6ch; 11. K-R2 (or 11. K x N, Q-B6ch and 12. . . . Q x N), Q-R6ch; 12. K-N1, N-K6 etc. or 9. N-B5, P x N; 10. Q-R2ch, K-N1; 11. Q-R6, R-K8ch; 12. K-R2, R-R8ch; 13. K x R, N-B5ch. **9. N-B5! Resigns!** White threatens 10. R-R7ch, N x R; 11. Q-N7 mate and 9. . . . P x N and 9. N x R are met by 10. Q-R2ch; 11. K-N1, Q-N3ch and 12. Q-N7 mate. A remarkable finish. The scattered black pieces make the position seem more like a composed study than a real game.



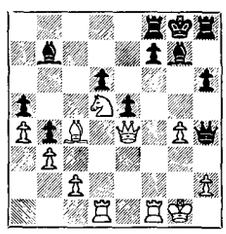
One of the most striking features of Karpov's play is the speed at which he plays in relatively simple technical positions. Against Ray Keene he played a 58 move game in 1½ hours whilst his opponent survived two time scrambles in one session taking 3½ hours. Against Olafsson the difference was even greater. After two sessions play the times were Karpov 2¼ hours, Olafsson 5¼. I do not know the times at the end of the game, but in all probability the difference was even greater – perhaps a record for modern chess?

The following is the shortest English win from the event.

White: R. D. Keene **Black: K. Wockenfuss**

1. P-QB4, P-K4; 2. N-QB3, N-KB3; 3. N-B3, P-K5!? 4. N-KN5, P-QN4; 5. P-Q3, NP x P; 6. P x KP, N-B3; 7. P-K3, B-N5; 8. B x P, O-O; 9. O-O, B x N? (9. . . . P-KR3!); **10. P x B, P-KR3;** (so far following a game of Stean, but Keene had been doing his opening preparation and found an improvement) **11. P-KB4! P x N** (or 11. . . . P-Q3; 12. P-K5!); **12. P x P, N-R2; 13. P-N6, N-N4** (not 13. . . . N-B3? 14. R x N!); **14. B-R3, N-K4; 15. B x R, N x B; 16. P x Pch, K x B; 17. Q-R5, B-N2; 18. Q-R8ch, K-K2; 19. Q x P, Q-KB1; 20. Q-B6 mate.**

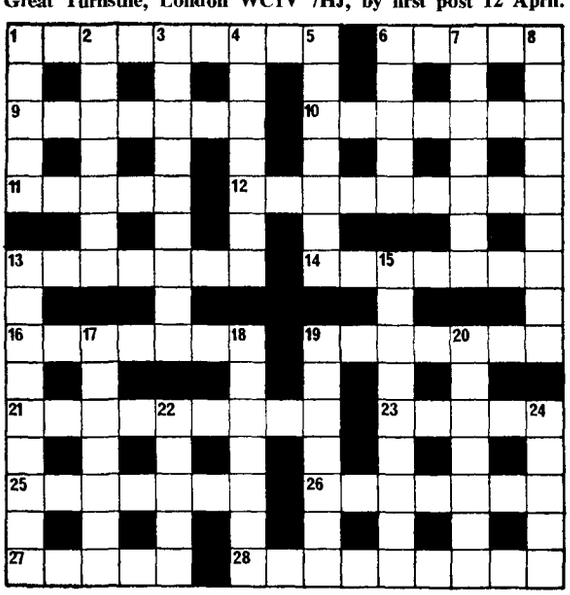
Problem 27:
White to play. How should the game go? Entries to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked not later than Wednesday 13 April.



Solution to Problem 25:
Black can draw by 1. . . . P-B4; 2. K-K5, P-B5; 3. K-K4, P-B6; 4. K-K3, P-R4; 5. K-B2, P-R5; 6. B-Q6, K-R6! since 7. K x P is stalemate and otherwise black continues with 7. . . . K-N5-R6 etc.

Weekend Crossword 1209

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1209, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 12 April.



ACROSS

1. Place caught between fresh start and possibly stale finish (9).
6. 'Tears from the —— of some divine despair' (Tennyson) (5).
9. Organisation man from whose brains I derive aid (7).
10. In saving money get rid of a sovereign (7).
11. Name which gives progress to the stamp (5).
12. Olympics start with mile trek converted to another distance (9).
13. It was known before the start of the year who was President (7).
14. Wounded, hurried on without part of the body (7).
16. Novel means of entering prison (7).
19. Islander who is a cross between two people (7).
21. Frost included by Hall in the circuit (9).
23. Vegetable for a foreigner (5).
25. Newcomer who may be let rest (7).
26. Timed to explode, it is left out (7).
27. Where there would be wickedness if the party were abandoned (5).
28. Superior person but not necessarily in Belgium (9).

DOWN

1. Nymph might be disguised as Diana (5).
2. Without us the film would be grim (7).
3. Woman man adored promiscuously (9).
4. A custodian goes North into the country (7).
5. 'A precedent —— a principle' (Disraeli) (7).
6. Material unearthed back to front (5).
7. Dog shower (7).
8. Dizzy place (9).
13. Royal jobs in architecture? (9).
15. Woman starting with a home in Ireland (9).
17. Yarn for the vanquished (7).
18. Thrill which comes during the tenth rally (7).
19. Dramatist would be depressed if he lost animal (7).
20. The master has rates revised in a short time (7).
22. Fruit served in the same London hotel (5).
24. What the puzzle has done with this clue (5).

SETSQUARE

Solution to No 1207

F	O	R	M	M	A	S	T	E	R		T	I	F	F
I		A		A		T		Y				T		O
D	I	S	P	I	R	I	T	E	D		P	A	I	R
O		H		D		F		B		C		L		T
			C	O	N	F	I	R	M	A	T	I	O	N
S		S		F		E		O		R		C		I
T	O	U	G	H	E	R		W	E	A	R	I	N	G
A		R		O				V		S		H		
G	E	R	U	N	D	S		G	R	A	V	E	S	T
E		E		O		K		E		N		D		S
C	O	N	F	U	C	I	A	N	I	S	T			
O		D		R		P		E		E		O		H
A	D	E	N		A	P	O	S	T	R	O	P	H	E
C		R				E		I		A		E		B
H	O	S	T		P	R	E	S	C	I	E	N	C	E

Prizewinners to No 1207

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Vol. 93 No. 2402

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Theatres

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE, 722 9301. 'The Last meeting of the Knights of the White Magnolia'. Evgs. 8 p.m. Sats 5 & 8 p.m. Ends 2 April.

NATIONAL THEATRE, 928 2252. 'Julius Caeser', 'Blithe Spirit', 'Bedroom Farce', 'Jumpers' & 'Strawberry Fields'. See daily press for dates & times or ring recorded Information 928 2256.

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Entertainments

'FILMS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH'. The first of six monthly film evenings by the Focus Group of the Royal Commonwealth Society, features two films from India, 'Jhaoo Chowdhari' and 'Ganga Mayya' directed and personally introduced by Yavar Abbas. Entrance 50p for RCS members; 75p for non-members. No seats bookable. 6.30 Wednesday 6 April. Commonwealth Hall, Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, WC2.

'FILMS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH'. A monthly programme of films made in Commonwealth countries will be screened during April-September by the Focus Group of the Royal Commonwealth Society and will be shown in the Commonwealth Hall at the RCS. Please apply for full details and prices of admission to the Public Affairs Dept, Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Avenue, WC2. 930 6733.

JAZZ BAND BALL: The Roundhouse, NW1. 267 2564. 1 April, Humphrey Lyttelton's Band plus The Crouch End All Stars. Tickets £1.50 at door.

Meetings

'UGANDA: THE PRESENT SITUATION.' A discussion led by Colin Legum, 'Observer' Commonwealth Correspondent and Paulo Muwanga, former Uganda MP and Ambassador. 6.30 p.m. Tuesday 5 April. 20p non members. Focus Group, Royal Commonwealth Society, 18 Northumberland Ave, WC2 930 6733.

'ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES' by David Pedley. London Young Humanists, 13 Prince of Wales Terrace, W8. Sunday 3 April at 7.30 p.m. 30p.

SIR JOHN SUMMERSON will lecture on 'The Steeple and the People' at St Saviour's Chuch Hall, Eton Rd, London NW3, Sun. 3 April, 8 p.m. Adm. free. Tube:Chalk Farm.

ADLERIAN SOCIETY. 'Loneliness', Tony Lake PhD BA. Tuesday 5 April 7.30 p.m. Changed Venue: Presbyterian Church Hall, Charing X Rd (next to Midland Bank, Cambridge Circus). Visitors welcome 30p (students 10p).

MORRIS & THE TRADITION of the Scholar-Printer, Kelmscott House, Colloquy, William Morris Centre. 26 Upper Mall, London W6. Saturday 23 April, 10.30 a.m-5 p.m. £3 (inc. buffet lunch). 01-748 5618.

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